

Interview

Ladrönn

Articles

Sketchbook of
Geoff Shupe

The Gallery

Jaime Martínez,
Khasis Lieb,
plus more

2d artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting
Magazine | Issue 081 September 2012

CREATING CARTOONS

Max Kostenko starts us off
in this new series, with his
interpretation of a 70's porn star.



Cover Image by Max Kostenko



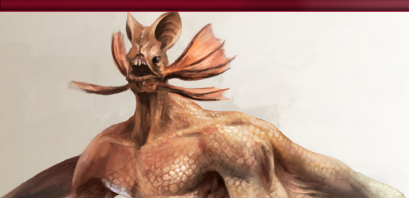
Weapon Design

In the first part of this brand new series, **Kris Thaler** meticulously shows us how to design and paint an assault rifle, and its various attachments!



Coastal Realm

We continue this stellar series, with **Levi Hopkins** providing our latest offering. He takes us on a journey to the Coastal realm.



Custom Brushes for Characters

Another new series kicks off this month, as **Richard Tilbury** explains how he created custom brushes for this large scaly monster.



Editorial

Welcome to the September issue of 2D Artist magazine! Last month we sadly said goodbye to some brilliant tutorial series, but don't fret as we have not one, not two, but three amazing new series to get those creative juices flowing.

Let's start things off with the charismatic chap that adorns this month's front cover, created by **Max Kostenko** for our new tutorial series: Cartoon Creation 101. And who doesn't love cartoons? From childhood shows to films, cartoons stimulate our imaginations and allow us to experience stories that are without restrictions. In this new series our artists show us how to design and paint basic cartoon characters. In this first chapter Max takes us through his exploratory designs and demonstrates how to capture and reflect the personality of a 70's porn star, through his expressions, costume and design.

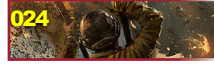
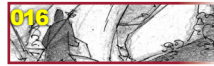
In the second of our new tutorial series our artists will be showing us how to create weapon concepts for different situations and environments, as if they were doing it for the games industry. This will involve them coming up with a concept and design, then demonstrating their techniques. **Kris Thaler** is first in line as he fires out his designs for an assault rifle!

As promised, this issue introduces you to a third new tutorial series as well! Artists often need a quick way of adding textures and details to speed up their workflow, and in this series our artists will be taking a basic un-textured character they have created and showing us how to make custom brushes, and then detail their character with them. **Richard Tilbury** gets the ball rolling by talking us through how he completed his large, scaly monster.

This month we reach the halfway point in our Six Realms series, which explores the limitless worlds and different realms within these that are created by talented artists and designers. **Levi Hopkins** takes on the challenge this time and illustrates the painting process behind his Coastal realm image.

We also bring you an otherworldly Making Of by the talented **Ken Barthelmey**, where he shows us how to take creature design from the initial concept sketches to the final image.

If all that wasn't enough to keep you going, we also have an interview with skilled comic artist **Ladrönn**, a sketchbook that



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Digital Art Masters: Volume 6 – Free Chapter

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illustrates the creative thought process of talented concept artist **Geoff Shupe** and, as always, a stunning gallery featuring the work of **Khasis Lieb**, **Gediminas Prankevicius**, **Aekkarat Sumutchaya** and lots more!

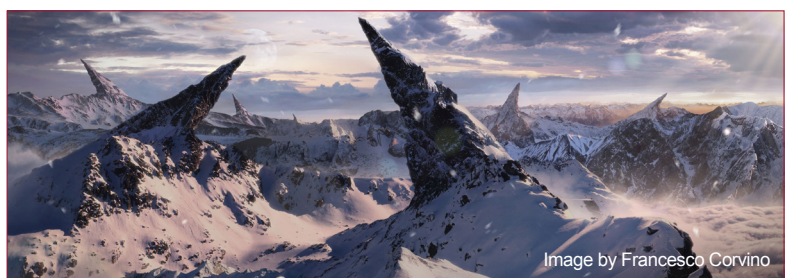


Image by Francesco Corvino



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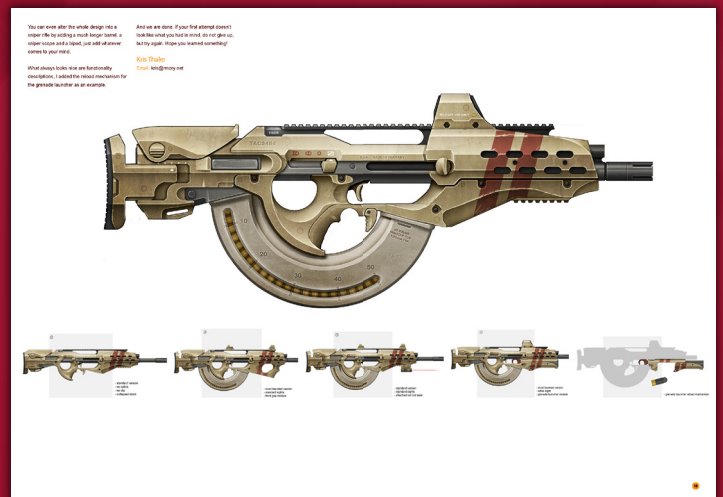
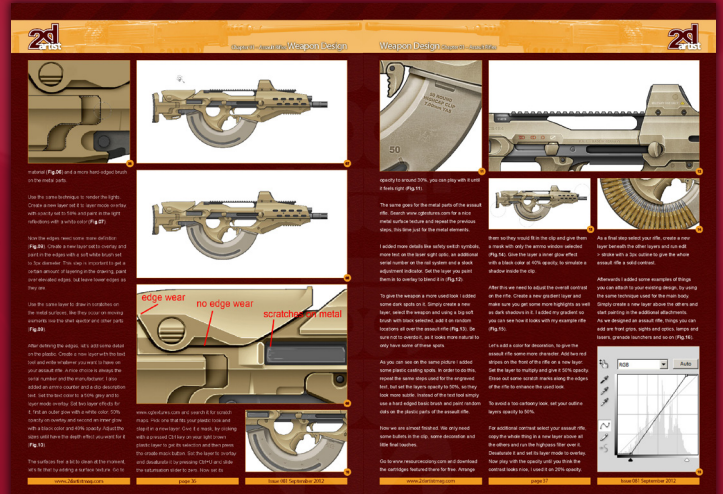
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2. Go to the **View** menu, then **Page display**;
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Contributing Artists

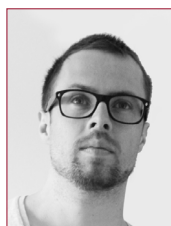
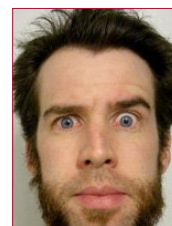
Every month many artists from around the world contribute to **3DCreative** and **2DArtist** magazines. Here you can find out a bit more about them! If you would like to be a part of **3DCreative** or **2DArtist** magazine, please contact: simon@3dtotal.com



Geoff Shupe

Geoff is currently working as a Concept and Flash Artist for Electronic Arts in Salt Lake City, Utah (US). Prior to EA he worked freelance as a background artist for DC and Marvel Comics, and as a concept artist for Privateer Press.

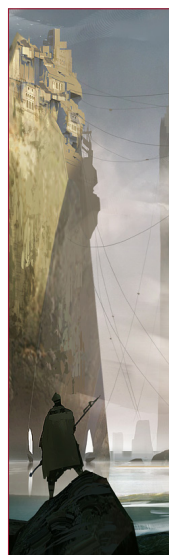
<http://gshupeart.blogspot.co.uk/>
mwnchrome@hotmail.com



Kris Thaler

Kris Thaler specializes in functional concept art for weaponry and armaments. He started as a freelancer and now runs his own concept art studios, rmory studios. Residing in the foothills of the German Alps, he always looks for new great projects and opportunities to push the envelope of design and functionality for the entertainment industry.

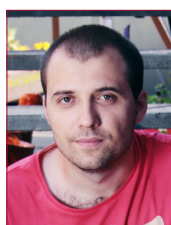
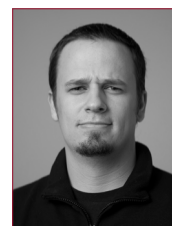
kris@rmory.net



Levi Hopkins

Levi Hopkins is currently an art director and senior concept artist in the video games industry. His most recent work can be seen in Guild Wars 2. With experience in all levels of art production - from 3D artist to environment and prototype lead - Levi has developed a unique and knowledge base style.

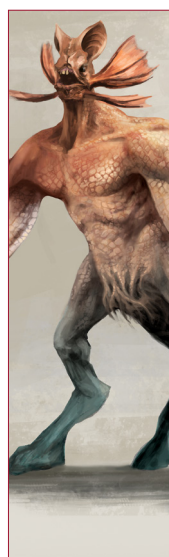
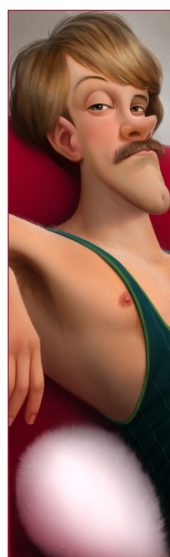
<http://levihopkinsart.blogspot.co.uk/>
levimhopkins@hotmail.com



Max Kostenko

Max Kostenko is a self educated artist based in the city of Podolsk, near Moscow. The main direction for his work is towards character development and illustrations for advertising. Working freelance for three years, for some of the largest agencies worldwide, he tries to combine caricatures and realistic rendering.

hypnoticw@gmail.com



Richard Tilbury

Richard Tilbury has had a passion for drawing since being a couple of feet tall. He studied Fine Art and was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have been dissolving in white spirit since the late nineties and his graphics tablet has become their successor. Richard still sketches regularly and now balances his time between 2D and 3D, although drawing will always be closest to his heart.

<http://www.richardtilburyart.com>
ibex80@hotmail.com



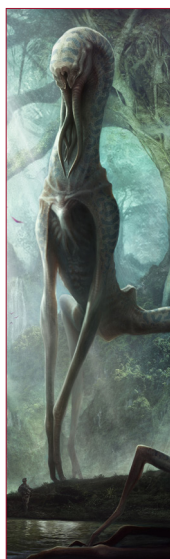


Ken Barthelmey

Ken Barthelmey was born in Luxembourg in 1989, and has been drawing since he was able to pick up a pencil. He has always been passionate about art and all things creative in general. Ken tries to bring realism and authenticity into his concepts and illustrations. He is a detail freak, he loves painting small details.

<http://theartofken.com/>

info@theartofken.com



Would You Like To Contribute To 3DCreative Or 2DArtist Magazines?

We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, 'making of' writers, and more. For more information, please send a link to your work to: simon@3dtotal.com



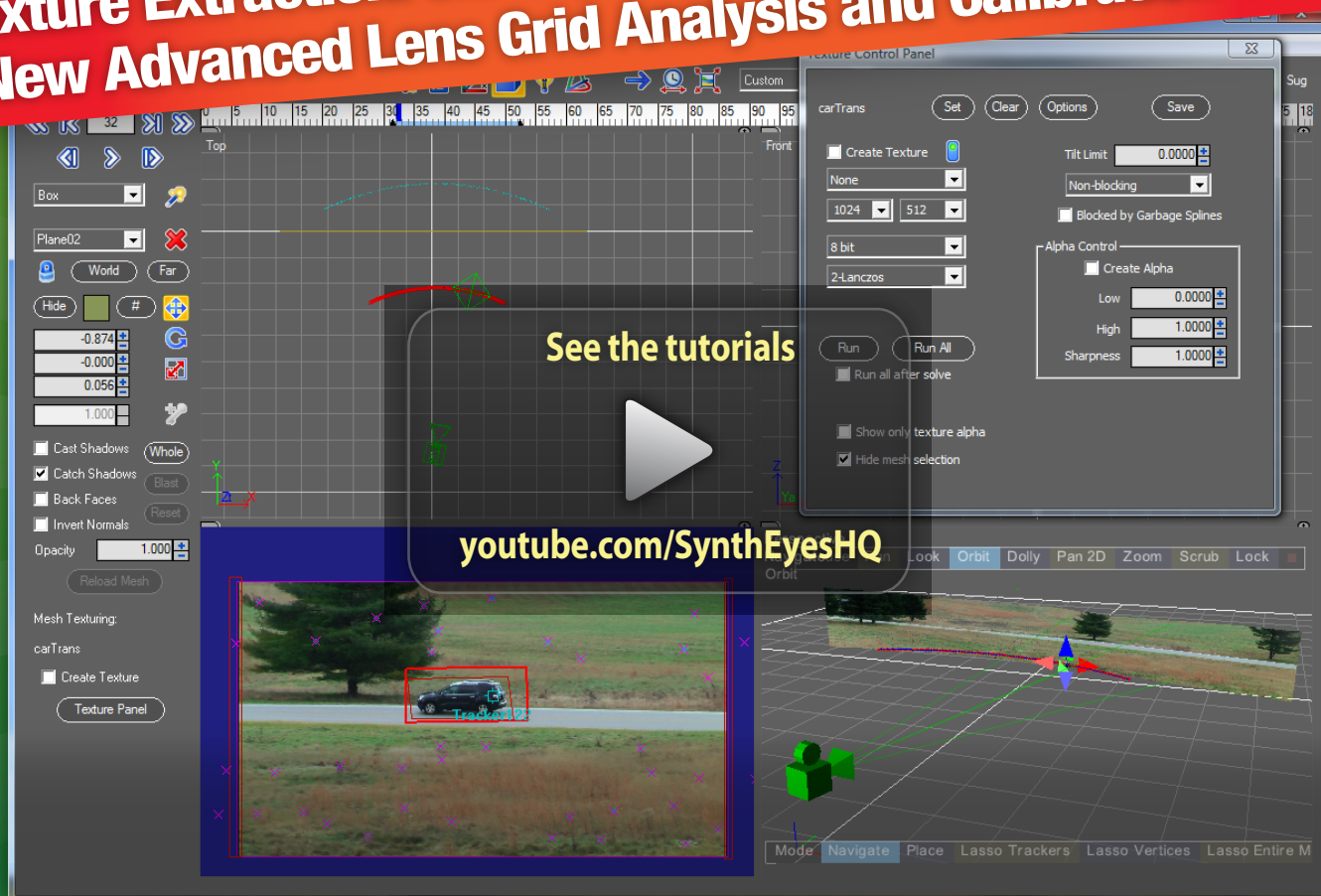
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LADRÖNN

When Ladrönn attended the 1996 San Diego Comic-Con, he was just a guy who liked to draw sci-fi comics in his spare time. A month later he was working for Marvel and he hasn't looked back since!



"I think movies based on comics books are refreshing Hollywood; they only need to find serious directors..."

Ladrönn
2010

Hi Ladrönn – thanks for chatting to me today. Now I've been having a nose through your biography and as a self-confessed sci-fi/fantasy/comic book geek, it's pretty exciting to be interviewing someone who's worked for companies like Marvel, DC Comics and Blizzard! How did you go from being an aspiring artist to having your name attached to a Marvel comic?

It is a pleasure to chat with you, Jo. I've been asked several times in the past about how I started working on mainstream comics. It was in 1995, when a good friend of mine convinced me that we should go to the San Diego Comic-Con and show our work. This was the first time I had been to a comic convention, and so I didn't know anything about it and my portfolio was just pieces of paper from here and there. During the convention I had the opportunity to meet some very nice people; one of them was the extraordinary British artist, Dave Taylor, who saw my work and gave me some excellent advice.

The following year, my friend and I returned to San Diego once again, and this time I was better prepared with a small, but nice, portfolio. I'd had time to write and draw a short story featuring one of my favorite characters, the creature from



Alien, so I wanted to show those painted pages to some Dark Horse editors.

My friend and I split; he went to the Marvel booth and I stayed in the Dark Horse booth to show my work. While I did find an editor, he was not very enthusiastic about my work, which was hard because I was particularly interested in Dark Horse since they have the license for the *Alien* character. So I gave the editor a copy of

my work and decided to go to the Marvel booth instead; I wanted to see if my friend was having better luck than me.

My friend was in the portfolio review line. Two Marvel editors, James Felder and Mark Powers, were there and soon they started looking at my friend's portfolio. While Mark was explaining something to my friend, James asked me if I was also there for a portfolio revision. I said I wasn't, and that I was just there in case my friend had a problem with the English translation. James then noticed that I had some drawings under my arm and asked if I was an artist, to which I responded that I wasn't really – I just liked to draw sci-fi comics and paint in my spare time. He took a look at my work, then gave me his card and asked for a full set of Xerox copies of all my *Alien* material.

When the convention ended I returned to Mexico again and one month later I got a fax from James, who had me in mind for a project he was planning: an *Inhumans* mini-series. In that moment I decided to quit my job and travel to the US, and that's how I ended up working for Marvel. Unfortunately the *Inhumans* project was never made and some weeks later James decided to leave the company, but Mark offered me other projects to work on, until I started to work on the monthly book, *Cable*.





It's funny how the smallest of decisions can have such a knock-on effect in life. If you hadn't joined your friend at the Marvel booth and met James and Mark, where do you think you'd be right now?

Sometimes the smallest decisions will take you to places you never imagined. Since I've always wanted to be a fine art painter, maybe I could have become famous and my works could be hanging in galleries around the world right now!

I have a simple, but effective, formula to enable anyone to reach their dreams. As we well know, life is not easy for everybody. You will deal with a lot of obstacles that will move you away from your goal, but you must always stay focused and take every single opportunity to get closer to your dream. Unfortunately some people spend their lives thinking about their dreams, but forget to actually prepare themselves, and so when the day finally comes, they simply fail.

The hardest thing is not when you receive the opportunity you've been waiting for, but what

comes next. In other words, don't just have a dream to fight for. Study, get experience and prepare yourself or you won't be able to succeed.

"The hardest thing is not when you receive the opportunity you've been waiting for, but what comes next."

In your bio you mention that you were inspired by three particular books when you were a teenager and that's what made you decide to become an artist in the first place. What was it about these books that you found so inspiring?

I remember those great books; each one filled a part of me, deep in my soul. The first was *Fábulas Pánicas* by Alejandro Jodorowsky, which is an incredible book full of plenty of great anecdotes. All the stories are a page long because they were originally published every Sunday in a Mexican newspaper.

The second book was H. R. Giger's *Necronomicon*. This book woke up the side of my brain that had been asleep until that moment and for me, it was the right path to follow. Every image in that book impacted upon my brain and was automatically integrated into my mind as if it had always belonged there. It made me think, "I need to be a fine art artist" and I started to develop my painting skills.

The third book was *The Black Incal* by Alejandro Jodorowsky and Moebius, which is a real science fiction masterpiece. It was after seeing this book that I decided to become a comic book artist.

I should also mention one more comic that is special to me, and that's *The Long Tomorrow* by Dan O'Bannon and Moebius. This short story led me to hold comics in the highest esteem.

You mentioned him earlier, but I gather you frequently collaborate with Alejandro Jodorowsky, who for those not in the



LADROW
2011



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know is a bit of a legend in the filmmaking industry, and also the author of a number of sci-fi comic books, including *The Incal*. You drew the covers for the US version of *The Incal*, right? What was it like working on that kind of project with someone of the caliber of Alejandro?

Alejandro Jodorowsky is a living legend. His works have been around for years and involving us in so many ways, from cult films and comics to theatrical operas, poems, etc. His creative mind has influenced many creative people around the world. He is a conceptual writer; he writes as he feels it and his ideas always flow like a river. He doesn't stop until a new concept is created and then he thinks of one more and starts all over again. Alejandro Jodorowsky has a young spirit and he is a natural teacher. I think his mission in this lifetime is to connect his mind with as many other people as possible, expand their ideas and create a collective consciousness.

Before Alejandro and I worked together on a specific project, as you mentioned I painted some covers for the US edition of *The Incal*. Then Alejandro wrote a cruel and sadistic short horror story called *Tears of Gold* for me. After this work Alejandro and Moebius thought that I was the right artist to draw *The Final Incal*.

It sounds like you have a great deal of respect for Alejandro. When tasked with creating a book cover for something like *The Incal*, where do you start? Are you given a brief with certain things that the cover must include or are you given free-reign to use your own imagination?

The best artistic collaborations always take place when the creative people are friends. Alejandro and I have been working together for a while now and we know each other pretty well. I always like to work with full scripts so I can get all the information when I am doing a book cover. If you are doing a cover, you have to pick



© Ladrönn 2012

an important moment of the story or elements that result in an interesting artistic composition. I had a lot of fun doing covers for *The Incal*; I know the characters very well and this made things easy for me.

When I am doing covers for other kinds of books – like the covers that I do for Marvel or DC – I always ask the editors for a small synopsis and references of the characters, and then I proceed to create some layouts.

When you are doing a comic book page the work process changes. A comic book page consists of several frames and you need to work with the storytelling in order to create a nice sequence. At this stage, the key is to keep things simple. The more you understand the story, the better.

I notice you have your own Wikipedia page, which is always a sure sign of success to

me! I also notice that you've won an Eisner award, which I gather is kind of like an Oscar for the comic industry. That must have been a pretty cool moment in your career!

I don't know who did it, but I think it is very cool to have a Wiki page! I think I'll need to take some time to update it properly. Information is key today. People write to me asking about how I work, what I use to paint and things like that, and I think this kind of information should always be available to everybody.

As you said, the Eisner awards are for comics what the Oscars are for the movies. I've been asked several times about the Eisner award that I received. It was nice – awards are always welcomed – but I really prefer not to think about it too much. An Eisner award is only a way to recognize the work that you are doing. It is a reminder that you are doing things well and you need to continue improving your work all the time.

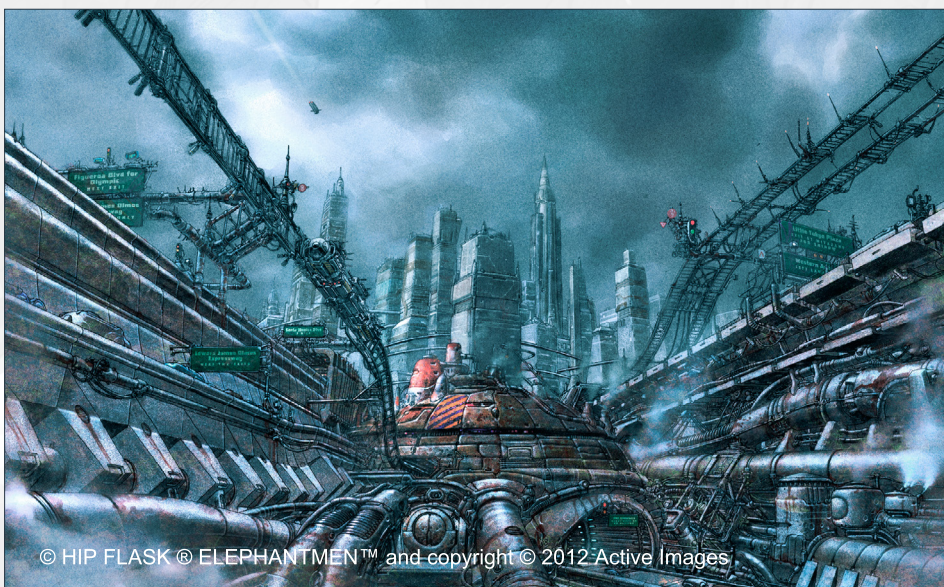
It seems like Hollywood has finally started to notice the potential of comic book worlds over the last couple of years, with all the Marvel-verse movies, the seemingly endless cycle of *Spiderman* films and reboots of *Batman* and *Superman* all proving popular. What are your thoughts on this kind of film? Do you think the classic comic stories are translating to the big screen successfully and have you seen any kind of benefits from bringing comic book stories to a wider audience?

From my point of view, it's not that the entertainment industry has suddenly discovered comics, because they have been producing movies based on comic book characters for years – we all saw *Buck Rogers*, *Flash Gordon*, etc. What is happening now is that CGI has brought new options to the film industry and movies like *The Avengers*, which would have been unthinkable in the past, are suddenly possible. The level of 3D graphics and special effects today is spectacular.

I think movies based on comics books are refreshing Hollywood; they only need to find serious directors, like Christopher Nolan, Peter



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Jackson, Guillermo del Toro or Ridley Scott, in order to give the films real value. At the end of the day, if the entertainment industry continues doing well with comic books movies, it will continue to bring fresh opportunities not only to companies like Marvel or DC, but to independent creators as well.

One last question to wrap things up: if you could pick any existing comic book character to draw, who would it be and why?

As an artist, I always feel very attracted to characters capable of expressing feelings. In the US mainstream some of the best characters were created by Jack Kirby: Kamandi, Mister Miracle, the Inhumans, the Silver Surfer, just to name a few. Those characters were part of my childhood.

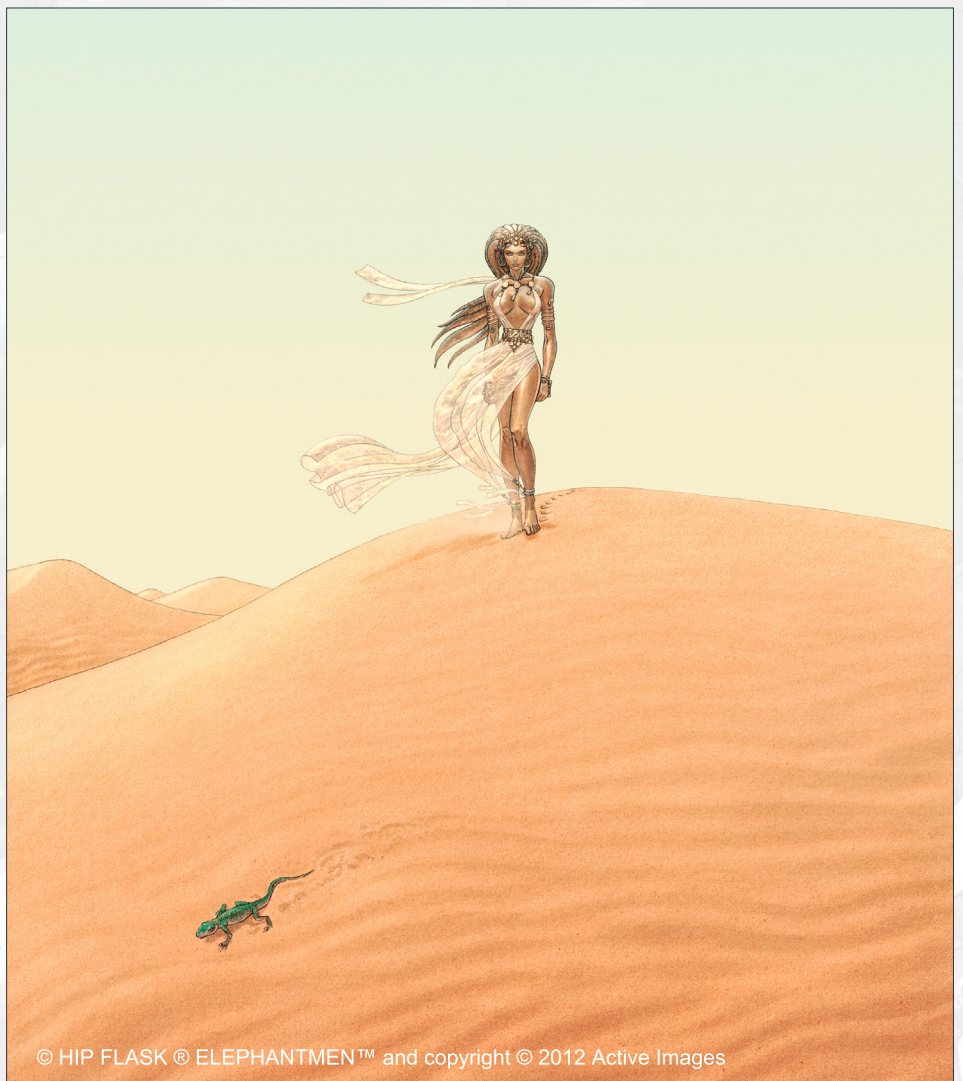
When I was a teenager I discovered European graphic novels, and I could see how the comic creators always pay special attention to exploring psychology and human emotions. I had a subscription to *Metal Hurlant* magazine and I started seeing great stories beautifully drawn and painted in styles I had never imagined. I became a huge fan of Moebius, Druillet, Caza, Bilal, Boucq and H. R. Giger, among other great European artists.

I can say one of my favorite characters is John Difool, who is part of *The Incal* universe. He is such a fantastic character – a nobody who is pretty much a toy of the universe. He is the perfect antihero; someone who feels and suffers, whose life is too complicated and who is part of a cosmic conspiracy. I like Ranxerox too – he is a real monster and nothing really matters to him. I also like Frank Cappa, Blueberry and Tin-Tin. There are some other characters that I love very much, but I need to go outside comics to find them. For instance, the creature created by H. R. Giger for *Alien* or Frankenstein's monster.

"As an artist, I always feel very attracted to characters capable of expressing feelings."



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At this point I think I would rather draw something created by myself. I would love to create a character who fits into my personality, and who could dedicate his life to finding answers, remove the false mask that covers the faces of secret organizations and governments, be worried about our world and universe, and bring hope to humanity.

Ladrönn

Web: <http://ladronn.cghub.com/>

Email: ladronn@ladronn.com

Interviewed by: Jo Hargreaves

A black and white sketch of a landscape. In the foreground, a dark, stylized figure of a person is walking away from the viewer, carrying a long staff or pole. The figure is positioned on a path that leads into a vast, open landscape. The background features rolling hills or mountains, some of which are filled with dark, textured shading. The sky is filled with wispy, cloud-like patterns. The overall style is expressive and sketchy, with bold lines and areas of solid black fill.

"Sketching with
black and white fills
always helps me read
a design to see if it
works."

SKETCHBOOK

Of Geoff Shupe

This month's sketchbook explores the creative thought process of talented concept artist Geoff Shupe. He shows us his exploration of vehicles, weapons, people and environments.

Sketchbook of Geoff Shupe

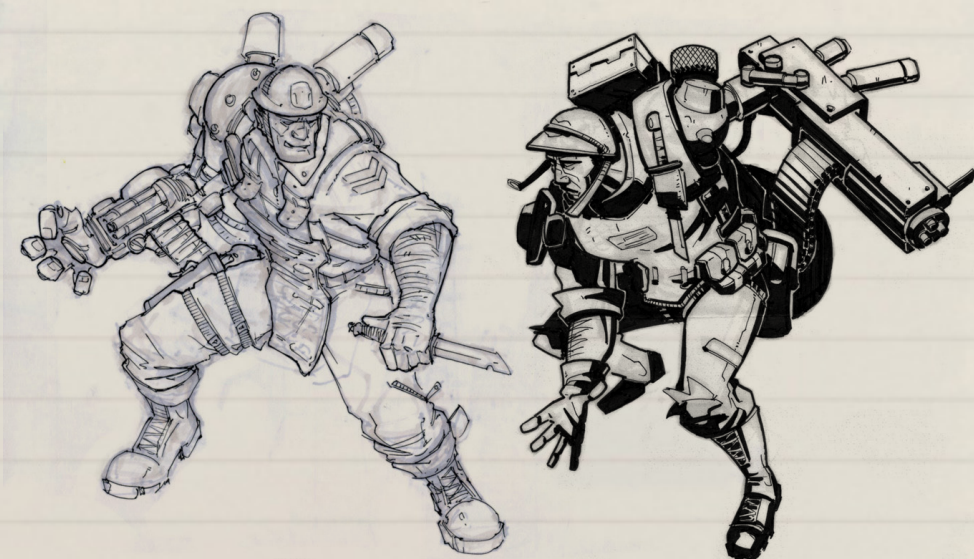
These were armor explorations, playing with some absurd shapes in the shoulders, groin, etc. I wanted to see if I could realize some typical fantasy armor designs into something that would actually fit on someone (**Fig.01**).



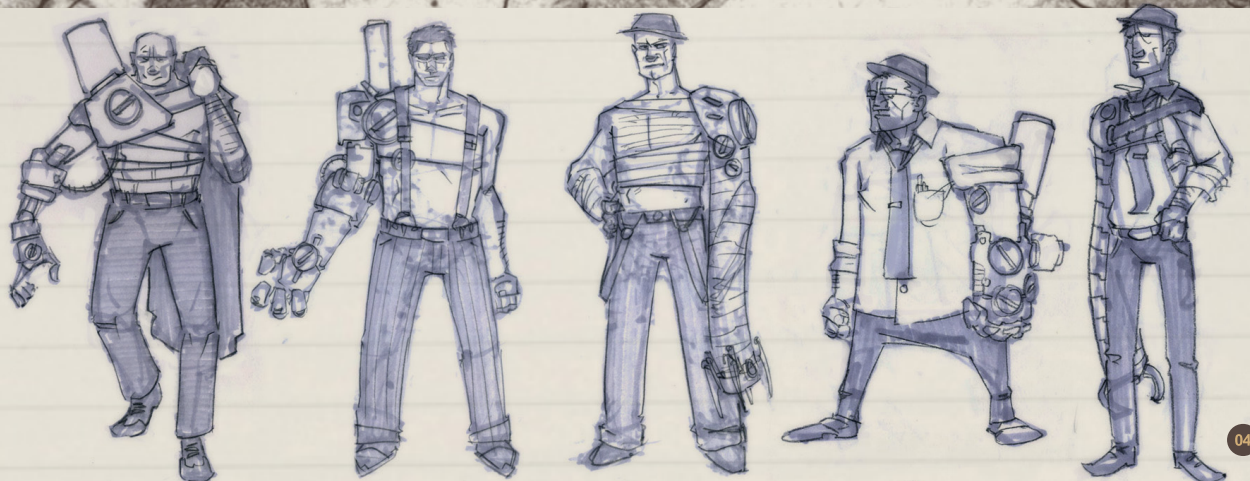
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What if elves were these little marginally intelligent beasties? Just kind of vicious and troublesome like they are in a lot of folklore. Like if they were evolutionarily divergent from trolls or something (**Fig.02**).

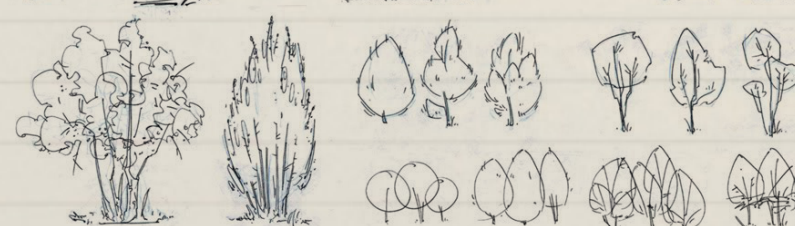
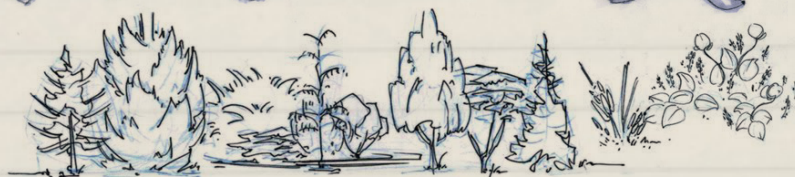
I love iteration to figure out a design. Here I was exploring different stylistic treatments to see how it influenced the attitude of the character (**Fig.03**).



03



04

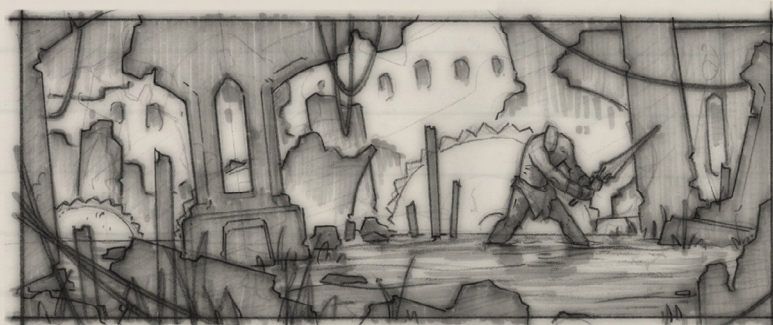
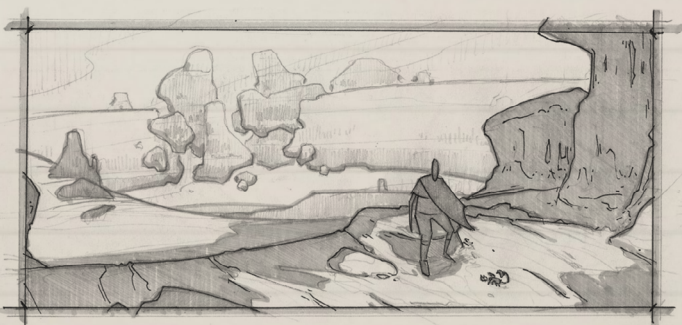
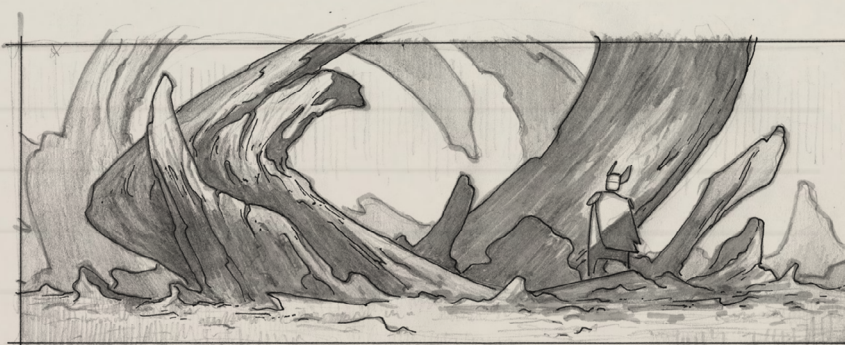


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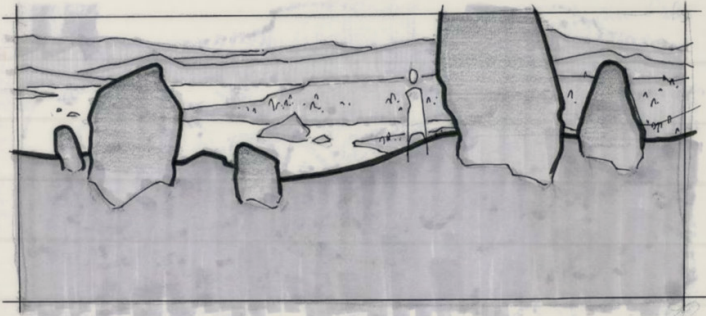
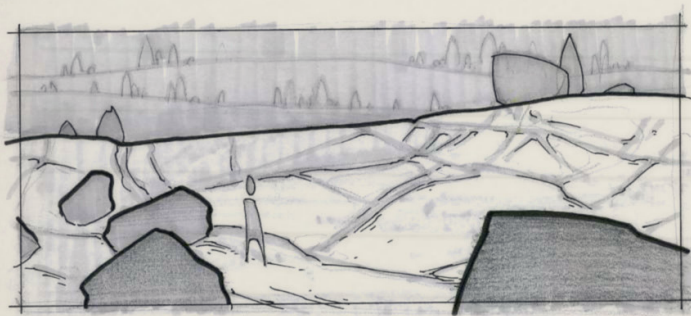
I was looking into the general design of a robotic arm for a classic gumshoe type and these are some of the possibilities that were found there. The type of tech had to match the demeanor of the figure (**Fig.04**).

Studies like this help me define my visual language. It helps to have a shorthand for common things like trees and bushes, so that you can just put them in place and move on (**Fig.05**).

Epic environments and sets always inspire me. I'm always looking for cool, dynamic shapes that add interest to a scene (**Fig.06**).

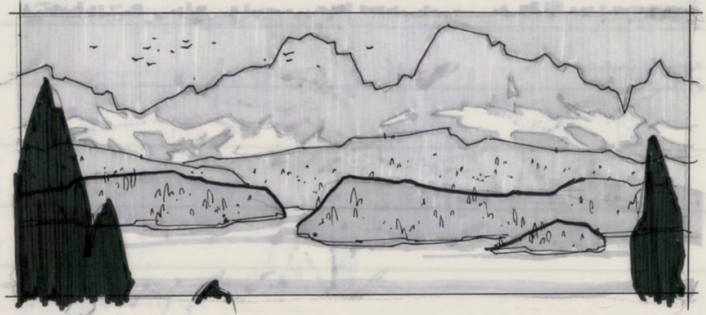


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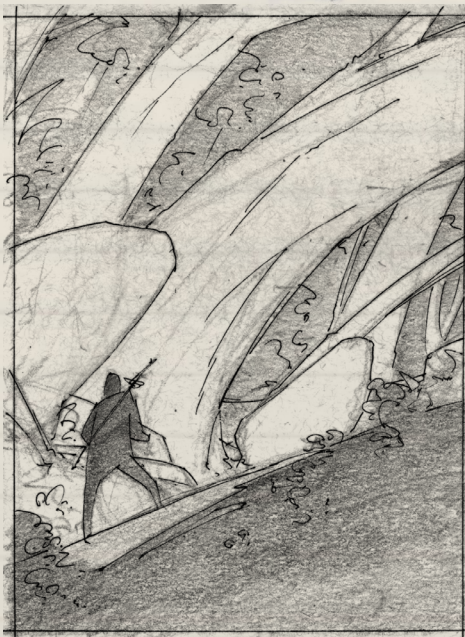
My biggest study recently has been composition. I do hundreds of these, looking for interesting balances between areas of detail and simplicity (**Fig.07**).

I'm in awe of grand trees and ancient stones. These kinds of sketches are basically just my projection of myself into some time and place where I would see this killer stuff (**Fig.08**).



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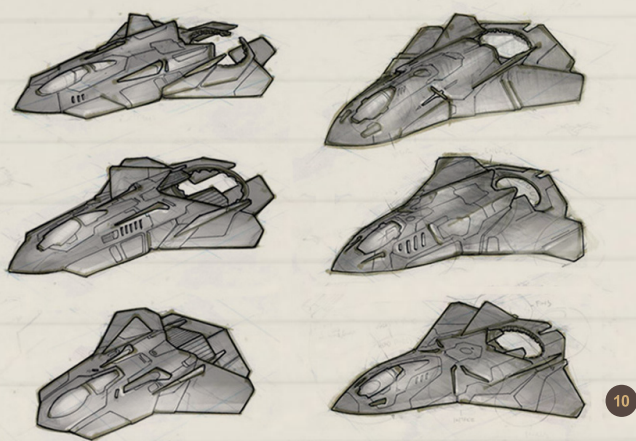
Right now I'm hooked on the concept of "environment as composition". Really just trying to perfect my layout skills rather than doodle isolated buildings (**Fig.09**).



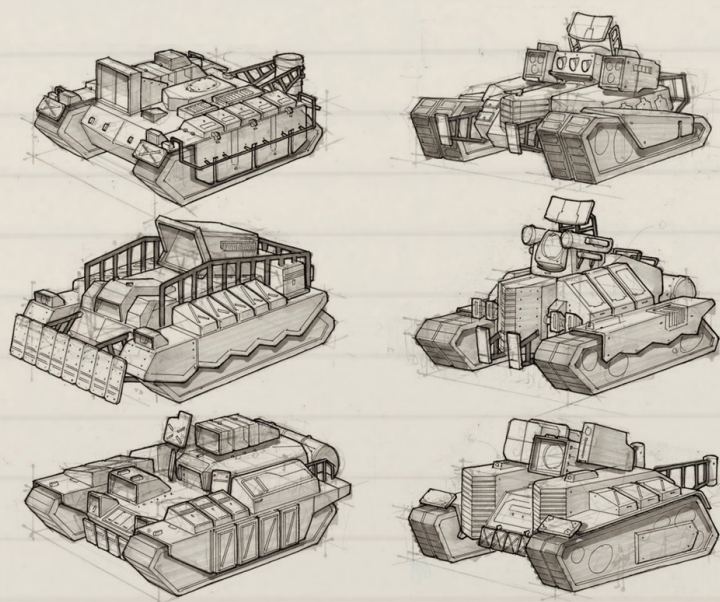
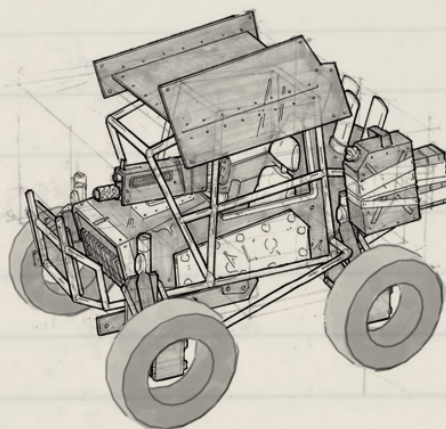
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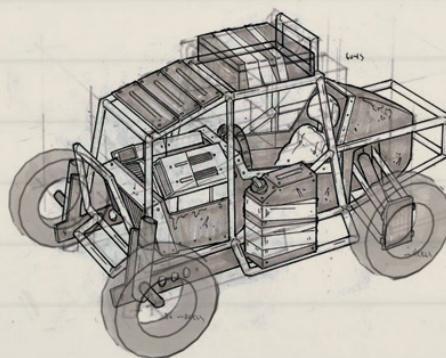
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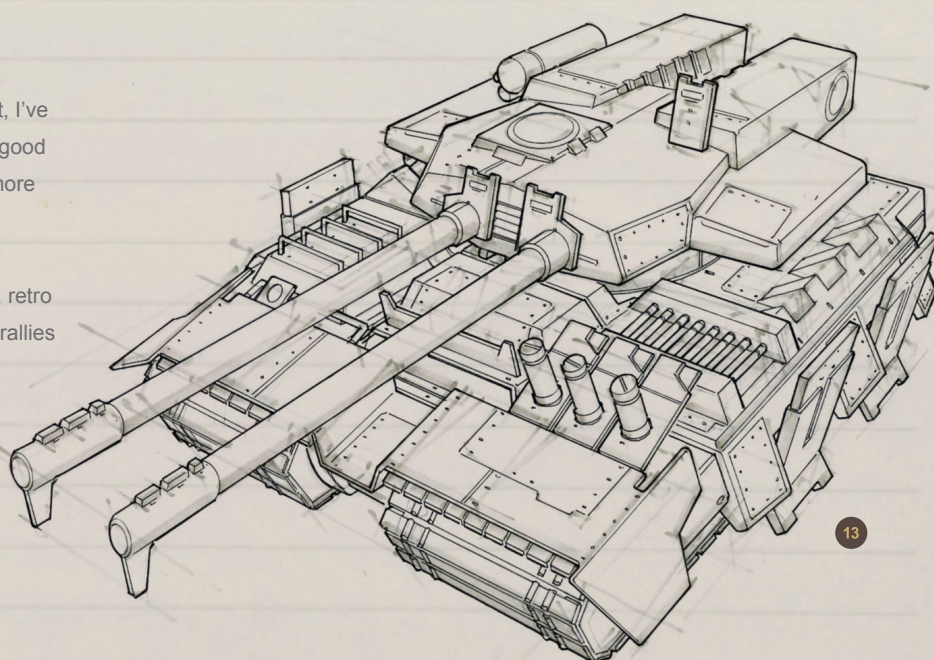
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I always have to push myself to come up with something interesting. Unfortunately in the past, I've been happy with my first stab at a design. The good stuff doesn't show up until you've done a few more (Fig.10).

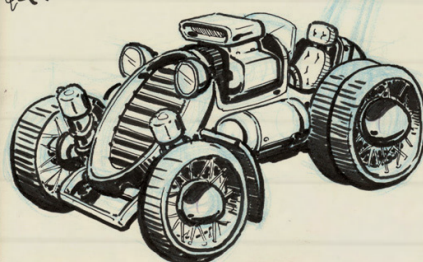
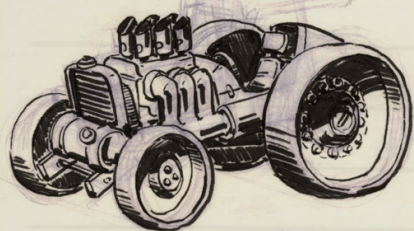
Playing around with the concept of a sprint-car, retro fitted for some good ole' post-apocalyptic road rallies (Fig.11).

I love tanks. This was a challenge to come up with something heavy-cool that read as a tank, but without the big barrel giveaway of the cannon; something with a forward-spotter or sensor platform (Fig.12).

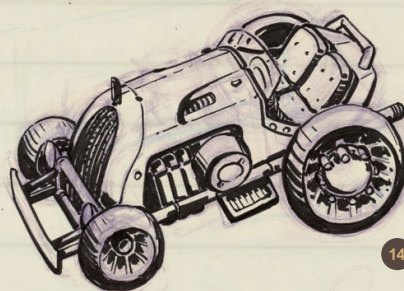
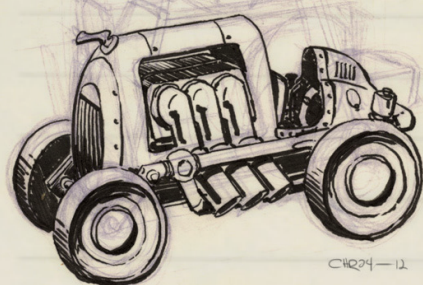
Did I mention I love tanks? If one big gun is awesome, then you can't go wrong with two (Fig.13)!



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I do these all day long just for fun. They're only three inches wide with a brush pen. It's a good challenge to keep pushing for more interesting combinations of big wheels and big engines (Fig.14).



It's not that tanks are just big guns; guns are like mini-tanks! I typically lay out a flat silhouette for a clear read, then just doodle inside that envelope to fill it full of interesting parts (Fig.15).

Sketching with black and white fills always helps me read a design to see if it works. It's easy to get lost in a bunch of loosely penciled lines (Fig.16).



Different stages of my process all coming together. After I've done a handful of sketches I really love Frankenstein-ing new iterations together by kit-bashing my sketches (Fig.17).

Geoff Shupe

Web: <http://gshupeart.blogspot.co.uk/>

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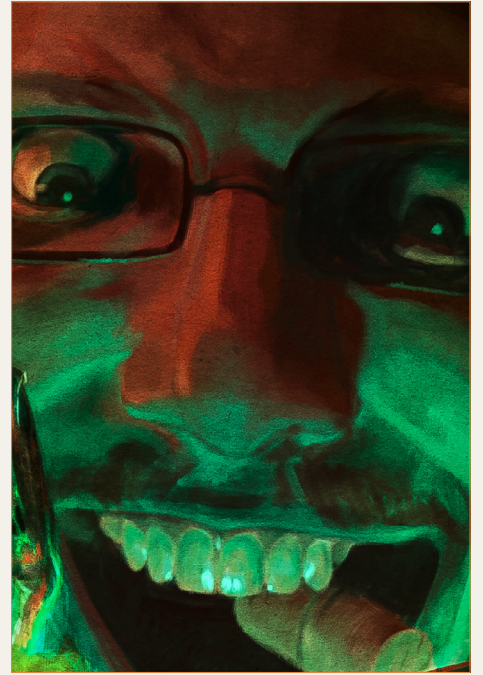
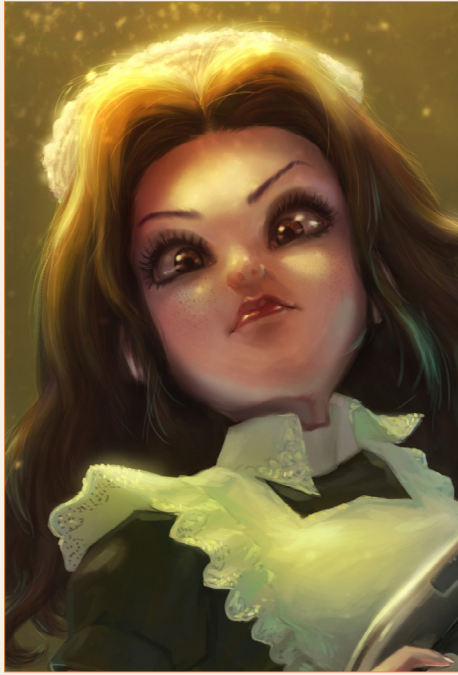
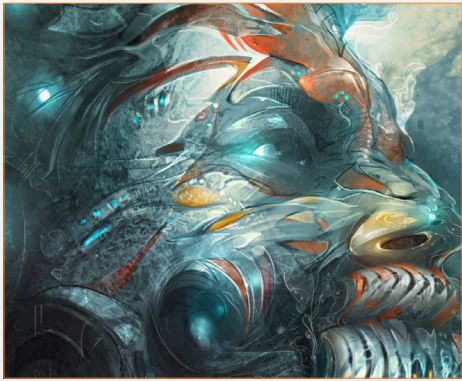
3D CHARACTER DESIGN SERIES WITH SCOTT PATTON

In this two volume series, Scott Patton shows the processes he uses to create a 3D character for feature films. The first volume explores Patton's fast and efficient method for concept sculpting, skipping the 2D sketch phase all together and designing the character entirely within ZBrush®. He covers everything from blocking out the forms and fleshing out the muscles, to adding props, detailing with alphas and posing the character. The second volume covers methods for creating a final color rendering using ZBrush and Photoshop®. Patton shows how he squeezes the most from ZBrush's powerful renderer to create both a wide and close-up shot of the character. He then shares creative Photoshop tips and tricks to quickly get to a finished piece of concept art from the ZBrush renders, covering topics such as adding and refining skin texture, hair, eyes, shadows and scars. Patton also discusses how to create backgrounds that enhance the character and overall composition.



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THE GALLERY

This month we feature: Jaime Martínez | Aekkarat Sumutchaya | Khasis Lieb | Gediminas Pranckevicius | Francesco Corvino
Hani Troudi | Darek Zabrocki | Sami Group Studio | Ali Kiani Amin | Eva Kedves

The Gathering

Hani Troudi

<http://behance.net/hanitroudi>

hanitroudi@gmail.com

(Right)



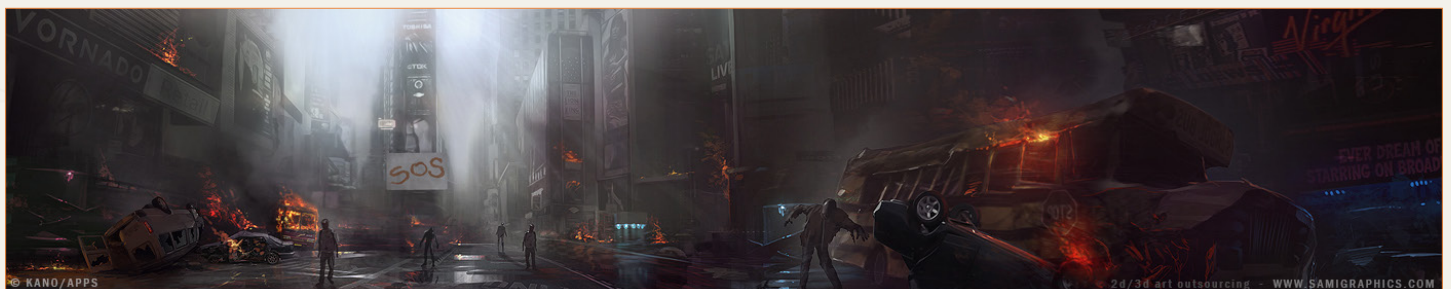
Zombie Invasion

Sami Group Studio

<http://www.samigraphics.com>

mail@samigraphics.com

(Below)



Absinthe

Khasis Lieb

<http://www.khasislieb.com>

kahsix@yahoo.fr



Kitchen Killer

Aekkarat Sumutchaya

<http://aekkarat.blogspot.com/>

webang111@gmail.com



Aekkarat

www.aekkarat.blogspot.com



The Peaks of Kasternau

Francesco Corvino

<http://www.francescocorvino.com>

mail@francescocorvino.com

(Above)

Hidden Passage

Eva Kedves

<http://evakedves.deviantart.com>

eva.k.cont@gmail.com

(Below)





Aldor "Iron Hand"

Jaime Martinez

<http://www.dabanaworks.com>

jaime@dabanaworks.com

(Above)



Bloody Whisper of Gabriel

Ali Kiani Amin

ali.kiani@gmail.com

(Right)





Mr. Wolf

Gediminas Prancevicius

<http://www.gediminas.com>

gediminaspr@gmail.com





Airborne

Darek Zabrocki

<http://daro9111@wp.pl>

daro9111@wp.pl

WEAPON DESIGN



01

There are many industries that hold a place for digital art, but none of these rely on it as much as the games industry! Lots of different elements go into making a game, but in many, weaponry is an exciting and integral part of game play. In this tutorial series our artists will be showing us how to create weapon concepts for different situations and environments, as if they were doing it within the games industry. This will involve them coming up with a concept and design, then demonstrating their techniques.

Chapter 01 – Assault Rifles

Software Used: Photoshop

Hey guys, in this article I am going to show you one possible workflow of how to draw an assault rifle.

The first step, as always, is to get your ideas together in some rough sketches, to get hold of some ideas and visualize them (Fig.01).

After you've picked your favorite – in my case the third one – the next step is to draw a refined outline with straight edges. In order to do this, create an empty canvas. For this tutorial I used a medium resolution of 3000 x 1500px; all machines should be able to handle this.

Create a new layer, chose a soft standard brush with 3px diameter and start drawing your outline (Fig.02). You can copy in your preferred sketch and blow it up so it fills the canvas, and paint over it so you have a base for your more detailed line drawing.

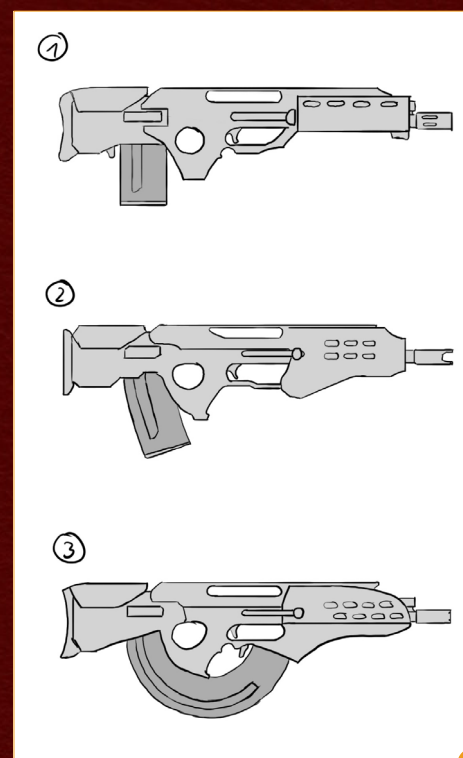
The next step is to give the line drawing a solid background color to add a general contrast and differentiate the rifle from the background. You do this by selecting the negative spaces around

the outlines of the gun with the Magic Wand tool and inverting the selection (Fig.03). Fill the inverted selection with a 50% gray on a layer below the outline.

Now you need to define the different materials of the assault rifle. Create a new layer for each material and name them accordingly. Select the different areas with the Polygon Lasso tool and fill them with the color of the respective material (Fig.04). I used a gray for metal parts, another gray for the rubber back of the stock, a light brown for the plastic parts and a slightly more desaturated brown for the clip's plastic.

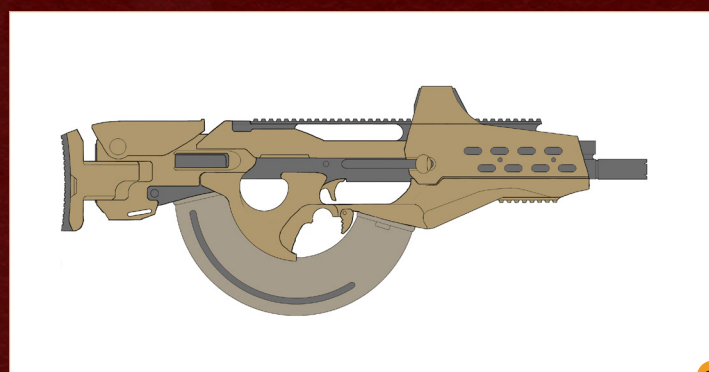
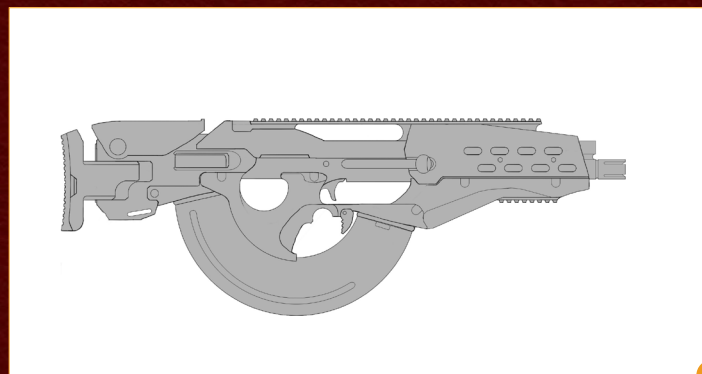
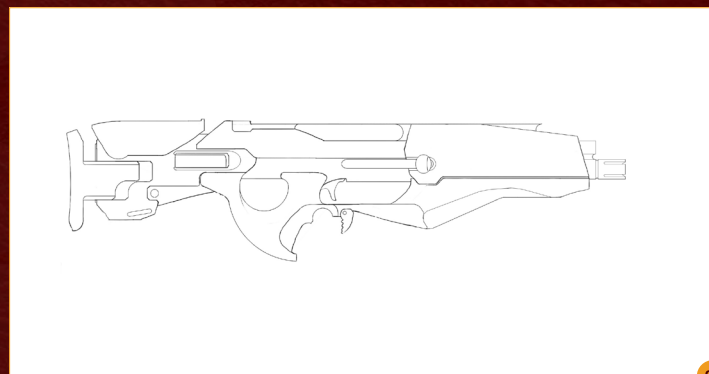
As you see, I decided to lengthen the muzzle break a bit and add some kind of aiming hardware to the top rail; in this case a laser sight optic. Without the optic it looked too new and right out of the factory; with the optic mounted it feels more like it's ready to use. At this point you can still make a lot of changes, but you should be finished with additions to your design after it.

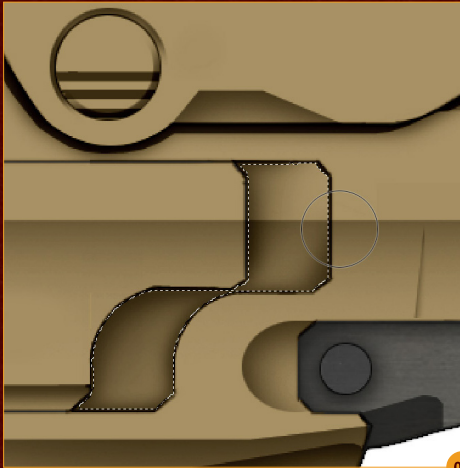
Time to achieve some depth in the drawing. I normally use a light source that is situated above the design and to the right; I painted in a little light bulb to visualize its position in Fig.05. Feel free to use other light source positions;



this is just the one I find to be the most neutral one for me.

Now go ahead and paint in all the shadows that would be cast by the light source into a new layer, where the opacity is set to 40%. Select the areas with the Polygon Lasso tool and use a black color with a soft brush on the plastic





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material (**Fig.06**), and a more hard-edged brush on the metal parts.

Use the same technique to render the lights. Create a new layer, set it to Overlay layer mode, with opacity set to 50%, and paint in the light reflections with a white color (**Fig.07**).

Now the edges need some more definition (**Fig.08**). Create a new layer set to Overlay and paint in the edges with a soft white brush set to 3px diameter. This step is important to get a certain amount of layering in the drawing. Paint over elevated edges, but leave lower edges as they are.

Use the same layer to draw in scratches on the metal surfaces, like they occur on moving elements like the shell ejector and other parts (**Fig.09**).

After defining the edges, it's time to add some detail on the plastic. Create a new layer and use the Text tool to write whatever you want to have on your assault rifle. A nice choice is always the serial number and the manufacturer; I also added an ammo counter and clip description text. Set the text color to a 50% gray and the layer mode to Overlay. Set two layer effects for it; first, an outer glow with a white color, 50% opacity on Overlay, and second, an inner glow with a black color and 40% opacity. Adjust the sizes until have the depth effect you want for it (**Fig.10**).

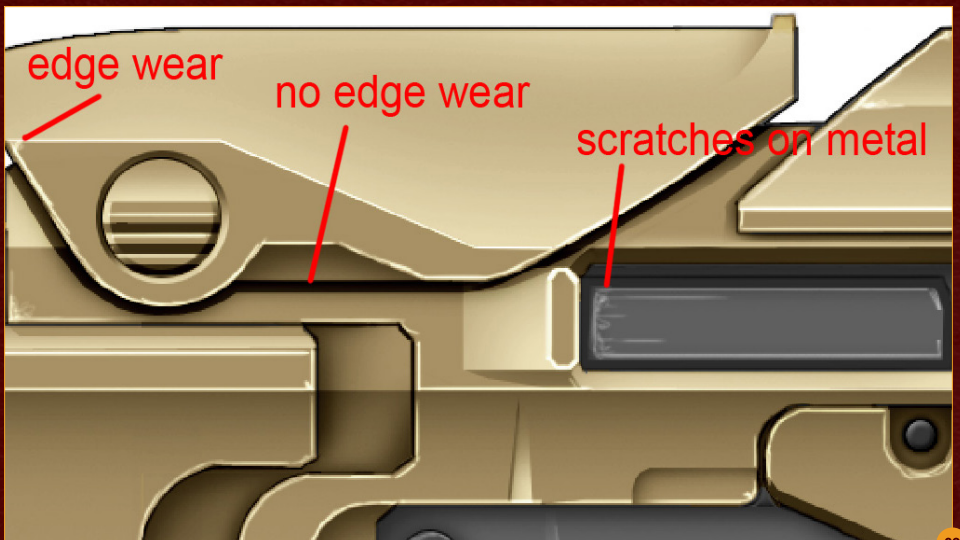
The surfaces feel a bit too clean at the moment; let's fix that by adding a surface texture. Go



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to www.cgtextures.com and search it for scratch maps. Pick one that fits your plastic look and slap it in a new layer. Give it a mask by clicking with a pressed Ctrl key on your light brown plastic layer to get its selection, and then press the Create Mask button. Set the layer to Overlay, desaturate it by pressing Ctrl + U and slide the saturation slider to 0. Now set its



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opacity to around 30% – you can play with it until it feels right (**Fig.11**).

The same goes for the metal parts of the assault rifle. Search www.cgtextures.com for a nice metal surface texture and repeat the previous steps, this time just for the metal elements.

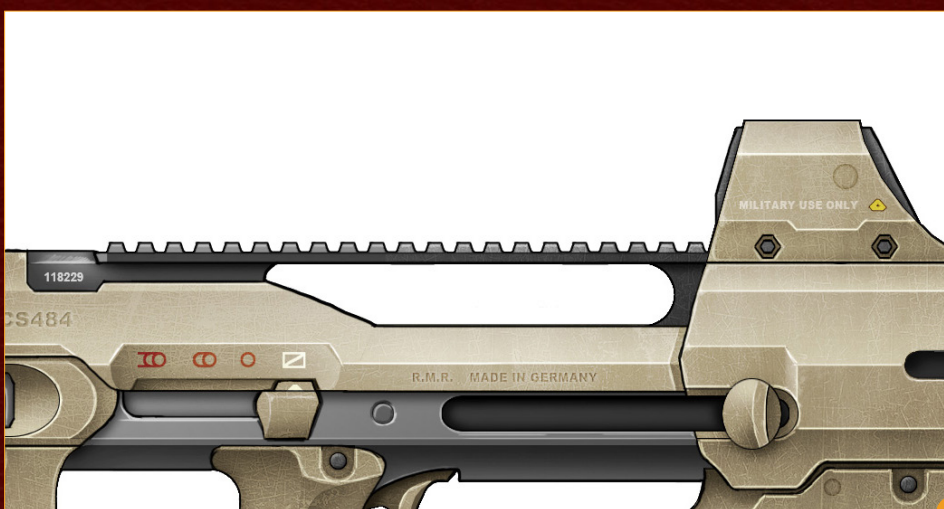
I added more details like safety switch symbols, more text on the laser sight optic, an additional serial number on the rail system and a stock adjustment indicator. Set the layer you paint them in to Overlay to blend it in (**Fig.12**).

To give the weapon a more used look I added some dark spots on it. Simply create a new layer, select the weapon and using a big soft brush with black selected, add black on random locations all over the assault rifle (**Fig.13**). Be sure not to overdo it, as it looks more natural to only have some of these spots.

As you can see on the same picture I added some plastic casting spots. In order to do this, repeat the same steps used for the engraved text, but set the layer's opacity to 50% so they look more subtle. Instead of the Text tool simply use a hard-edged basic brush and paint random dots on the plastic parts of the assault rifle.

Now we are almost finished. We only need some bullets in the clip, some decoration and little final touches.

Go to www.resourcecolony.com and download the cartridges featured there for free. Arrange



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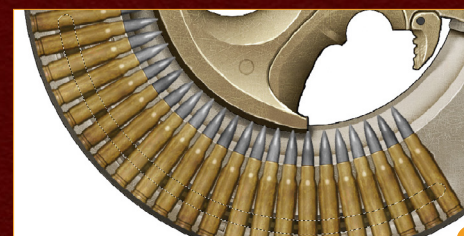
them so they would fit in the clip and give them a mask with only the ammo window selected (**Fig.14**). Give the layer a inner glow effect with a black color at 40% opacity, to simulate a shadow inside the clip.

After this we need to adjust the overall contrast on the rifle. Create a new gradient layer and make sure you get some more highlights as well as dark shadows in it. I added my gradient so you can see how it looks with my example rifle (**Fig.15**).

Let's add a color for decoration, to give the assault rifle some more character. Add two red stripes on the front of the rifle on a new layer. Set the layer to Multiply and give it 50% opacity. Erase out some scratch marks along the edges of the rifle to enhance the used look.

To avoid a too cartoony look, set your outline layer's opacity to 50%.

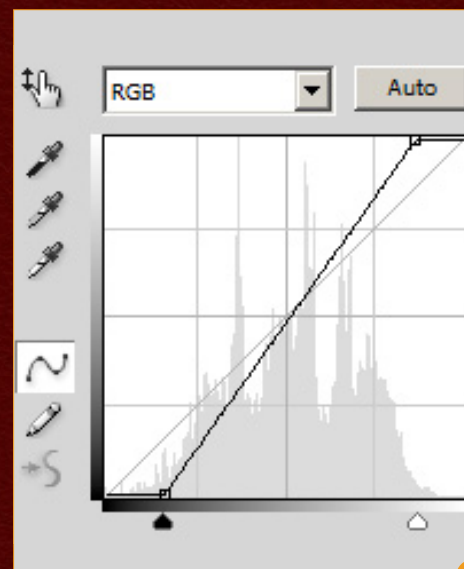
For additional contrast select your assault rifle, copy the whole thing in a new layer above all the others and run the High Pass filter over it. Desaturate it and set its layer mode to Overlay. Now play with the opacity until you think the contrast looks nice; I used it on 20% opacity.



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As a final step select your rifle, create a new layer beneath the other layers and run Edit > Stroke with a 3px outline to give the whole assault rifle a solid contrast.

Afterwards I added some examples of things you can attach to your existing design, by using the same technique used for the main body. Simply create a new layer above the others and start painting in the additional attachments. As we designed an assault rifle, things you can add are front grips, sights and optics, lamps and lasers, grenade launchers and so on (**Fig.16**).



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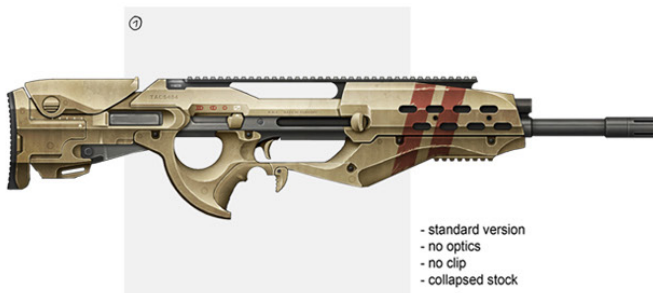
You can even alter the whole design into a sniper rifle by adding a much longer barrel, a sniper scope and a bipod – just add whatever comes to your mind.

What always looks nice are functionality descriptions, so I added the reload mechanism for the grenade launcher as an example.

And we are done. If your first attempt doesn't look like what you had in mind, do not give up, but try again. I hope you learned something!

Kris Thaler

Email: kris@rmory.net



- standard version
- no optics
- no clip
- collapsed stock



- short barreled version
- standard sights
- front grip module



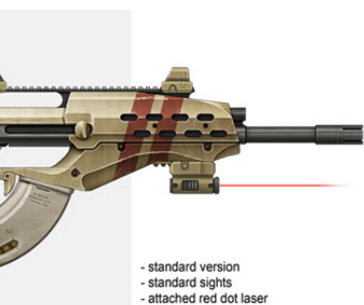


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The Six Realms

Chapter 03 – Coastal



One of the appeals of many modern computer games is the ability to explore vast worlds created by talented teams of artists and designers. You can wander around, venturing from one realm to another, absorbing impressive landscapes while tackling challenges and enemies of every description. One of the challenges faced by the concept artists working on a game like this is creating a variety of environments that still look consistent design wise. Within this series of tutorials our artists will be showing us how to design six diverse, fantasy realms from the same world while also describing their own painting process.

Chapter 03 – Coastal

Software Used: Photoshop

Introduction

In this tutorial I was charged with creating a coastal encampment in a fantasy setting. Some specific tasks were to create a beacon, high walls, and some town elements. I immediately began gathering references for this project. My reference gathering involved finding images specifically related to coastal elements, along with a wide variety of random abstract pieces. With a library of images to work from, I began to form various ideas that I wanted to capture in the piece. In the beginning it was very abstract thinking; sometimes it was just a single descriptive word or a type of mood. Once I felt satisfied with my research, I began moving forward with the actual painting.

To start this piece I began with just some simple brush strokes and overlays to get rid of the absolute fear I experience when staring at a blank white canvas (**Fig.01**). A blank canvas feels incredibly daunting, so I always quickly block in some colors or values that help get my mind moving forward. Even though I had a basic palette down at this point, I didn't want to completely lock myself into it at this early stage in the painting.

Another step I did here was put down some basic brush strokes indicating the ground surface dropping back into perspective. I knew I wanted my horizon line lower, so I could eventually have a very vertical beacon.



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Next I started blocking in some large masses for potential rock formations. At some point I wanted to add architecture high up on the rocks, so this was a bit of pre-planning. I added some indications of texture on these giant shapes to portray rock formations (**Fig.02**). The textures were done with a bit of photo overlay combined with custom shapes.

After I had laid in some basic shapes I quickly blocked in the general area and shape of the beacon I wanted (**Fig.03**). I kept the beacon incredibly loose to start, just a few brush strokes to indicate a basic idea. The reason I started very loose is that I didn't want to jump into designing the beacon before I had decided the composition, placement, scale and a variety of

other scenarios. In this step I also knocked out the large shape in the middle of the canvas because it was overpowering the beacon, and started to detail the ground surface.

At this point in the painting I was feeling confident about the general direction of the piece. If I hadn't been feeling the piece, even though it was still early, I would have gone ahead and started from scratch. It's incredibly hard to go forward on a piece when it's just not sending you the right vibes. It basically becomes an epic battle to finish a piece you probably should have just thrown away.

So now that I had come to terms with my own sanity, I blocked a few more details into



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the beacon. I wanted the beacon to remain monumental with just some basic edge definitions (**Fig.04**). I also decided my light direction on the piece, indicating it on the beacon, the ground surface and the huge rock.

Looking at the piece at this point I decided the composition was really unbalanced. The way I remedied this issue was by simply blocking in some larger rock masses to the right of the beacon. I kept the rocks very stylized, with some hard edges, just due to my personal preference on this piece (**Fig.05**).

Now the piece looked a bit flat with basically just a mid-ground component. To push the depth more I included a large rock in the background that falls within the flow of the rock right in front of it. I kept this rock completely hazed out and low contrast to imply a further distance from the viewer (**Fig.06**).

To push the depth even more I increased the contrast in the foreground and added some smaller rock elements. I also tried to portray the foreground as actually being within a large shadow being cast from off canvas. I also pushed a cool color in the foreground to contrast with the warm light being cast through the piece.

Stepping back from the piece I decided to add a scale indicator in the foreground: a little dude (**Fig.07**). I have an addiction to adding silly little dudes wandering through my pieces. In my mind it tells a story more than just staring at a beacon and some rocks. I like to think of the moment



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this character comes into view of the scene and takes it in. I also added some simple scale elements in the mid-ground, with a few brush strokes to indicate small ships with sails. I'm not too keen on rendering out pieces to hell-and-back and enjoy moments where a simple shape can indicate an entire subject.

Now that the piece had clear divisions between the foreground, mid-ground and background, I just pushed some details further. I also flipped my canvas, which I'd been doing during the whole painting process, just to try and keep a fresh eye on the piece. Once again, I indicated some very basic shapes on top of the rocks where I wanted some structures to be built

(Fig.08). This was exactly along the lines of how I blocked in the beacon; just a few shapes to judge the basic feel and placement prior to any heavy detailing will save you a lot of time. These simple shapes were created with a Marquee tool and some color sampling right off the rocks they are placed on.

To continue this piece at this point I just went into full-on detailing mode. I jumped all around the canvas, hitting elements in the foreground, blocking in some of the architecture on the rocks, and throwing in a lot more of an atmosphere with some clouds (Fig.09). I did a lot of brush strokes and translated them into perspective to give the feeling the clouds

are moving through the piece towards the background. A lot of the texture on the rocks was created by simple layering custom shapes.

Finally, the last step in any painting I do is some basic color tweaks and contrast adjustments. These are all done through adjustment layers, which I can use to erase out some of the effects on parts of the canvas that I'd like to keep unchanged (Fig.10). This stage really can be an endless abyss, leaving you to second-guess a variety of choices you've made. I find it best to just be very decisive here, otherwise you can easily end up turning your scene into a night scene, or a disco party, or whatever else you can stumble upon with adjustment layers.



09



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Levi Hopkins

Web: <http://levihopkinsart.blogspot.co.uk/>

Email: levimhopkins@hotmail.com





CARTOON CREATION 101



Everybody loves cartoon characters, at one point or another we've all appreciated them. Whether they were in childhood shows or films, cartoons allow us to experience stories that are beyond limits. In this tutorial series our artists will show us how to design and paint basic cartoon characters. This will involve them producing numerous exploratory designs and showing you how to capture and reflect the personality of the character through expressions, costume and design.

Chapter 01 – 70's Porn Star

Software Used: Photoshop

The very first step in creating a character for me is to find material on the internet. Since I got the theme of "70's porn star", I put this into Google. Initially, I singled out a few things that symbolize a porn star of the 1970's to me:

1. Porn – a naked or half-naked man
2. The star – a man with a majestic, perhaps haughty look, with film awards
3. 70's – a moustache and hair, which were popular in those years

Based on these ideas, I saved a few favorite photos. A sitting posture seemed to be very suitable to me, and therefore I imagined the future character sitting in a chair with a haughty air. Also, I liked the idea of him having a moustache, big hair and tights.

Several years ago, when I first started working as an illustrator, I paid little time and attention to searching for photographs of the project, although it is a very important part. Now I can confidently say that the more detailed the image and the more detailed the design you think about before you start working, the easier the process will be.

I have often lacked the patience to think about the image at the sketching stage. I wanted to quickly move on to coloring and focusing on the details so much that I missed the overall composition. So now I spend a lot of time on reference sketches.

For this project, I'm starting to work with a rough outline of the silhouette, for which I usually use a brush with a large radius. I call this stage "playing with your imagination," because in the subconscious the mind draws the missing parts and as a result interesting images can be born. I'm not specifically trying to draw a head and shoulders; I just relax and paint, and in the process some suitable options emerge. Incidentally, the picture size is around 3000 pixels and 300 dpi, which is an average size I feel comfortable enough to work with for a detailed drawing (**Fig.01**).

Next, I lower the opacity of the first layer to a translucent silhouette and create a new layer, where I am trying to find a successful line (**Fig.02**).

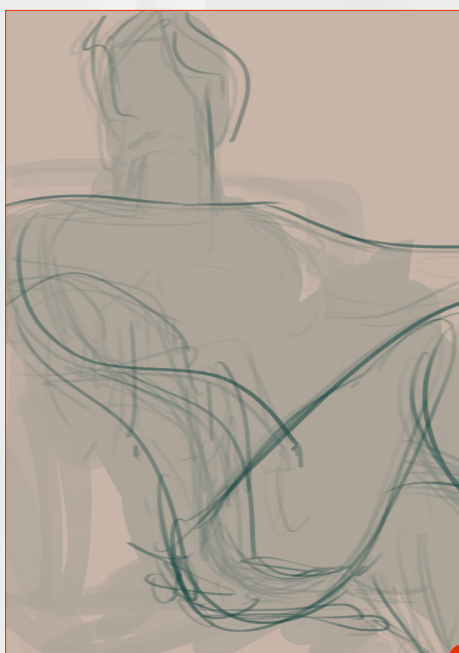
Then I create a new layer and render a more accurate silhouette. Now that I am satisfied with the contours of the body and head, I think about working in more detail. The first and second



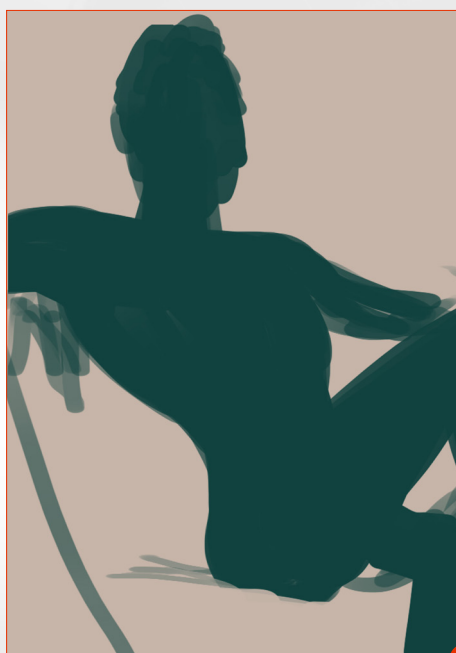
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stage, I repeat until I reach the desired result (**Fig.03**).

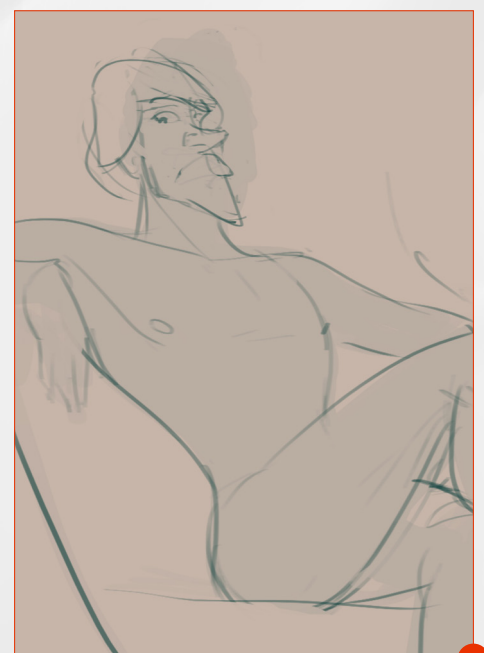
Again, in a new layer, I try to find interesting facial lines. It seems to me that the actor has a very suitable refined chin and nose (**Fig.04**).



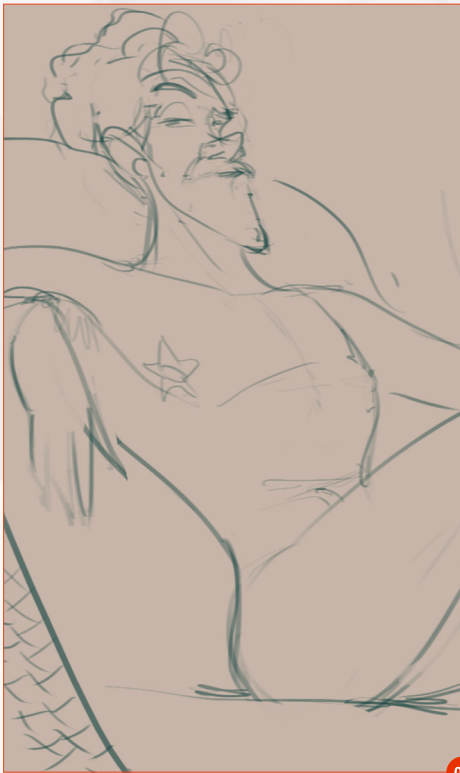
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At this point, I like the outcome of the sketches I've done, and I decide that it's time to make a more elaborate and detailed sketch (**Fig.05**).

Now I am sure that I'm on the right track. The features and expression are the look I am after (**Fig.06**).

I pour a uniform color over the sofa and the silhouette of the character in different layers, so that later it will be easier to edit the location of the character, if needed. Generally when it comes to commercial work it is better to use layers, as this can save time when updating. But when I paint for myself, I often use only one layer as it is more picturesque and less computerized (**Fig.07**).

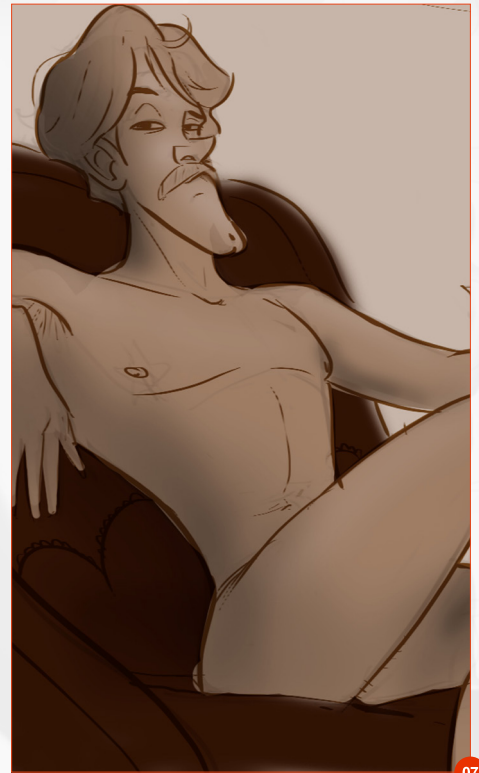
The next step is finding the right lighting and volume. I decide to make a soft light on the right, so I darken the left side and the right lightens up. At this point, I work in one color, since no color is easier to precisely focus the volume on. For shading, I use a Multiply layer and clipping mask, then I choose a color slightly darker than the area in which I will paint (**Fig.08**).



06

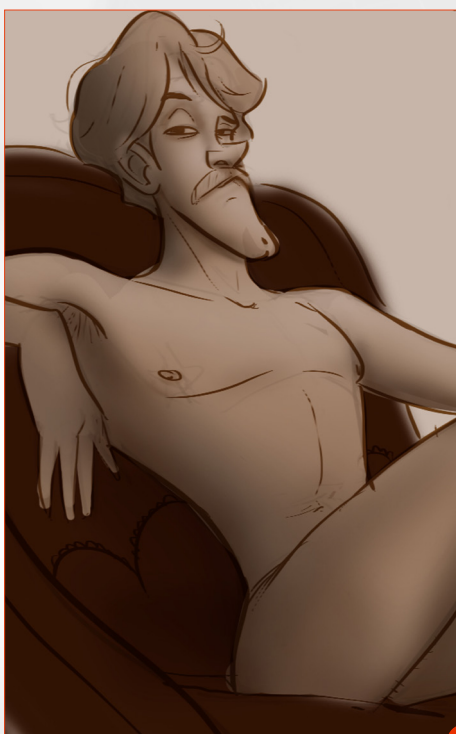
Adding a pinkish color on the cheeks, nose, knees and ears always gives a more lively type of skin. Now the whole body looks too dark, so I decide to lighten the layer with the character in (**Fig.09**).

Sometimes I use the Auto Contrast feature to brighten any part of the picture as it can help

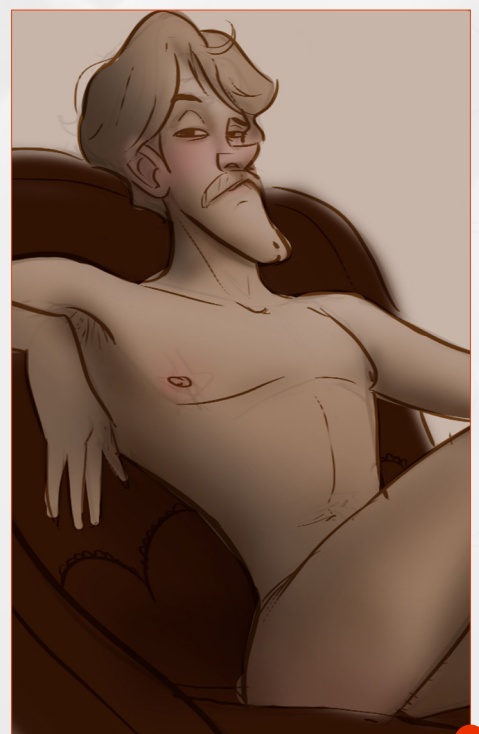


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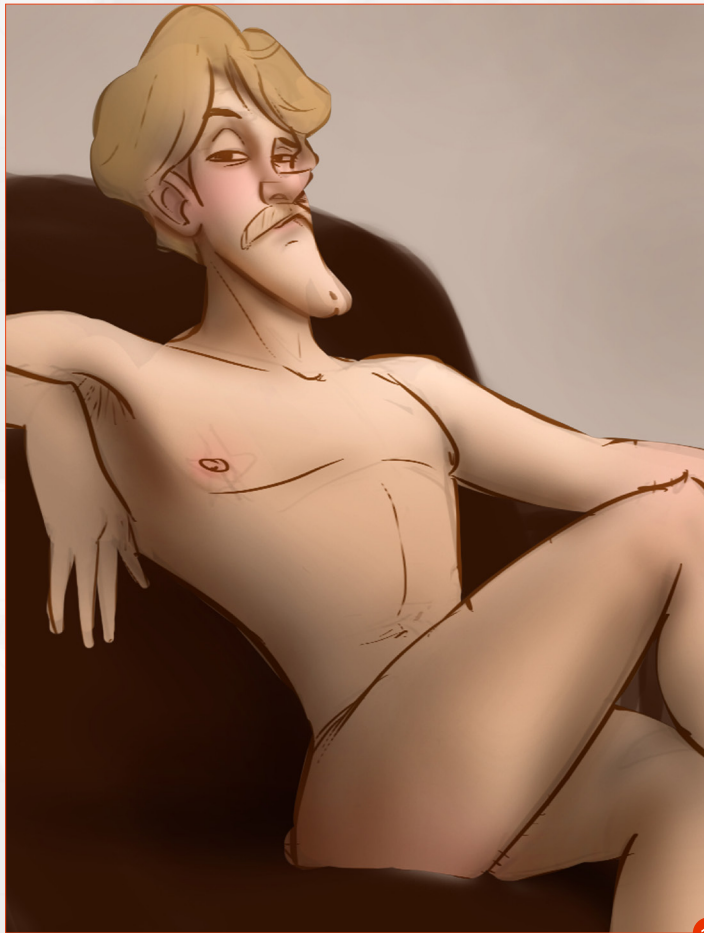
a lot and Photoshop will suggest which part of the picture to make lighter or darker. But it's important not to over-use this feature; it is best to use it as a small hint in some cases. For example, if you are working on an image for a long time and feel that something is wrong in it, but can't understand what, often the problem is that the character doesn't have enough contrast



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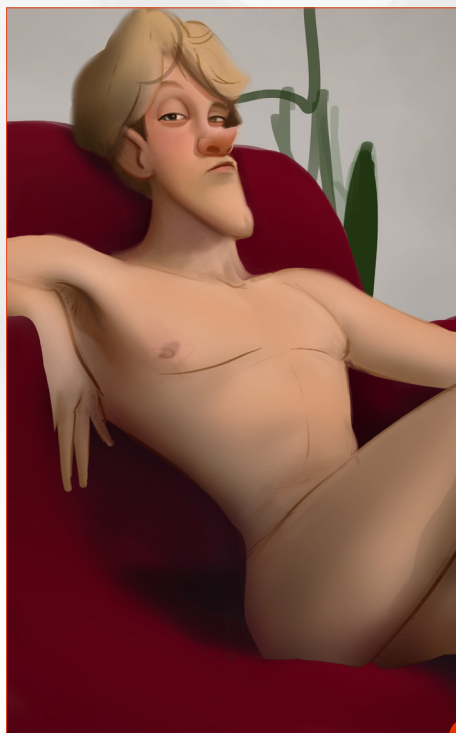
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to make them stand out from the background, causing them to blend in. In order for the picture to look good, each item must be clearly legible in the composition (**Fig.10**).

In my case, Photoshop has proposed that the body is lightened, but now the skin is very white and looks like plastic. So with a soft brush, I add a solid color, which gives a more realistic view of the skin (**Fig.11**).

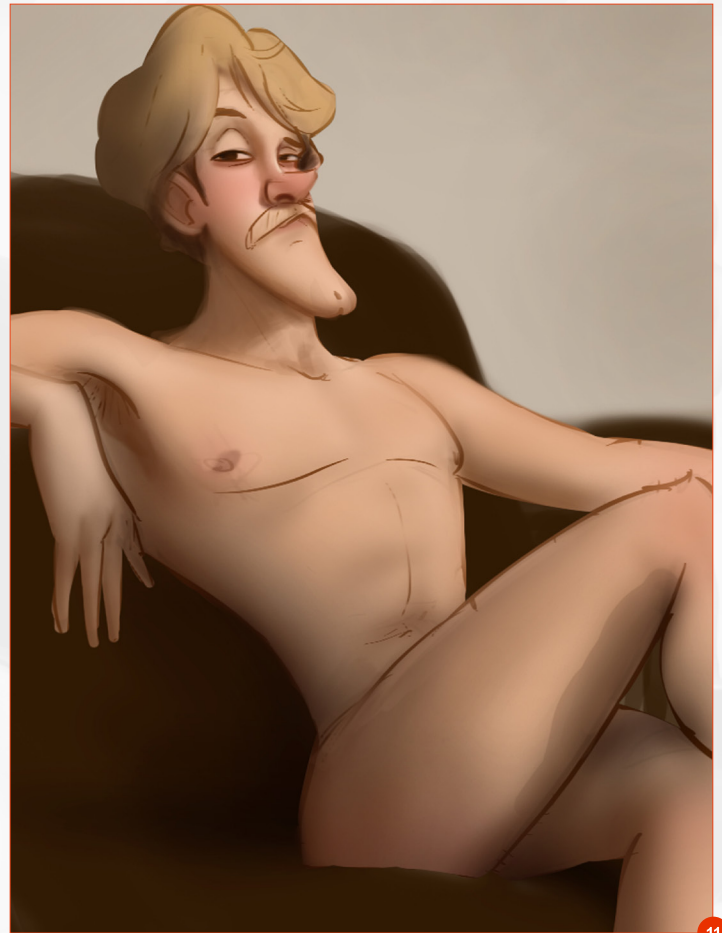
The next day I look at the picture with my wife and together we realize that the picture doesn't have enough bright spots. So I decide to make the sofa brighter and paint it red. Actually, I often leave work for a few days and later, with fresh eyes, I am to be able to assess all the flaws (**Fig.12**).

Next I start to work on the face, to make it look more alive. So that it looks nicer, I add different shades to the skin color taken from the background color and the sofa color. On the

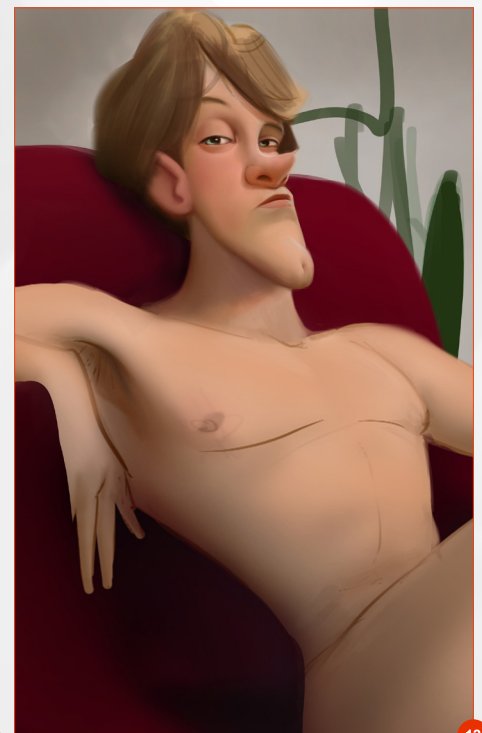


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cheeks, lips and ears I use the red from the sofa, on the chin I use green from the plants and on the eyelids I use a little bit of purple from the background. The main thing to remember is to



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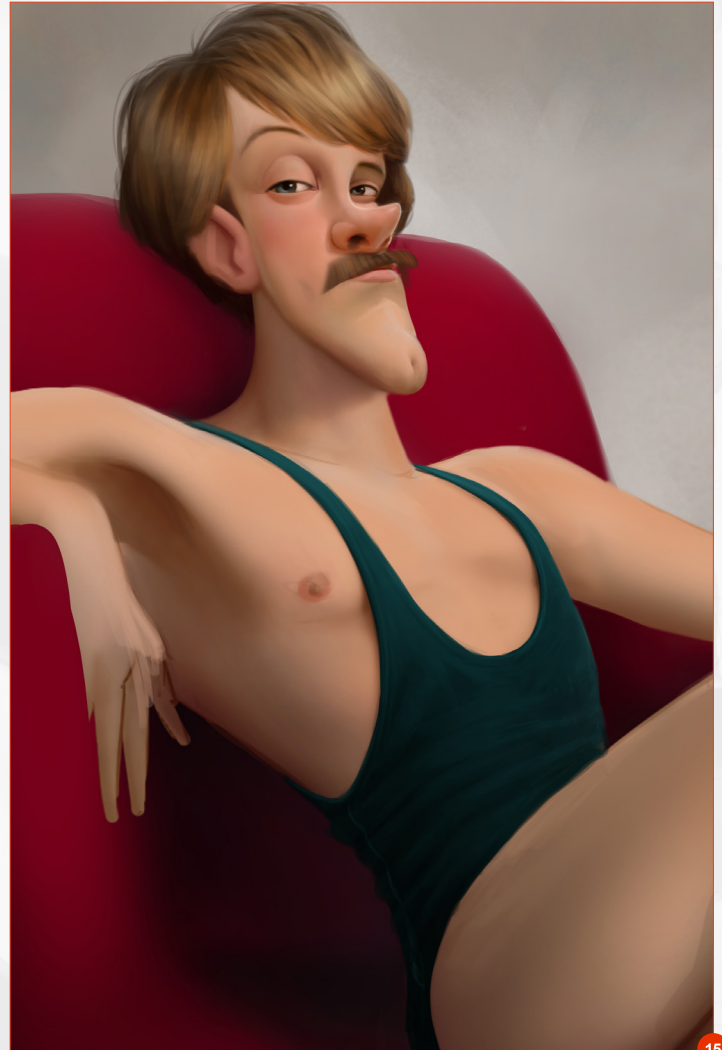
do this very carefully and not to overdo it. I use the brush with 10-20% opacity and 10-20%. I also add the red from the sofa on his neck and back (**Fig.13**).



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Next, I decide to add a leotard and work through the hair. I usually start with a dark brown color and a broad brush, then gradually decrease the radius of the brush and add a more reddish and yellowish color. I used to reduce to the smallest brush size, but in reality the hair curls and bunches up to each other, so each individual hair isn't visible. Realistically every hair that is drawn is not necessarily rendered; it is enough to draw the end of several individual hairs on the edge of his hair, bearing in mind the edges aren't always clear and may appear blurry, giving a fluffy effect (Fig.14).

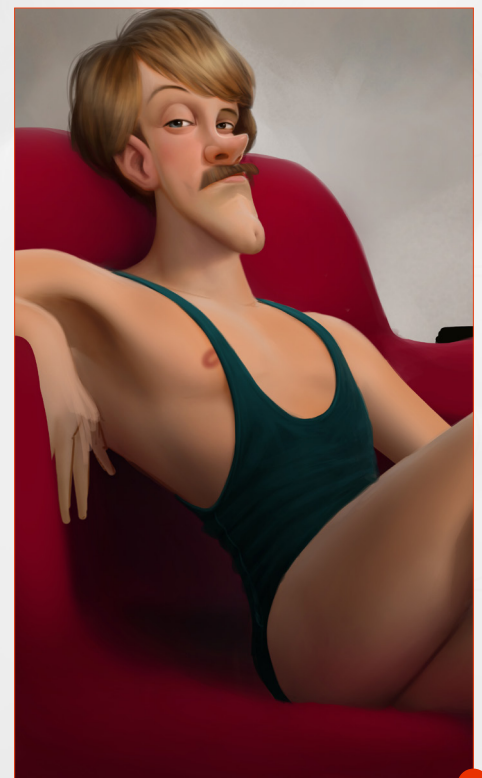
I reduce the brightness of the hair because it looks too red. When drawing the leotard/clothes it is important to add the fabric folds and seams, because without them clothes will look like plastic. I usually look at photos as a reference for better results (Fig.15).



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I make a new layer and in this layer I create a clipping mask. With a soft brush I darken and lighten a different area. Most importantly, I try not to forget what coverage I chose initially. I have the right light and shadow on the side of his legs, and I add a gray reflex from the background (Fig.16).

The last step is to add details: the soft pillows and film awards etc. I make the fluffy pillows with the Smudge tool, in the same way that I use it for shading. I draw every hair on the legs and arms manually. Typically, I work on the hands last; this time I take a picture of his hand and redraw it in accordance with the lighting throughout the picture. Finally, when I am happy everything is finished, I combine all the layers into one and render everything again to make a more traditional look, leaving some of the strokes and roughness in (Fig.17).



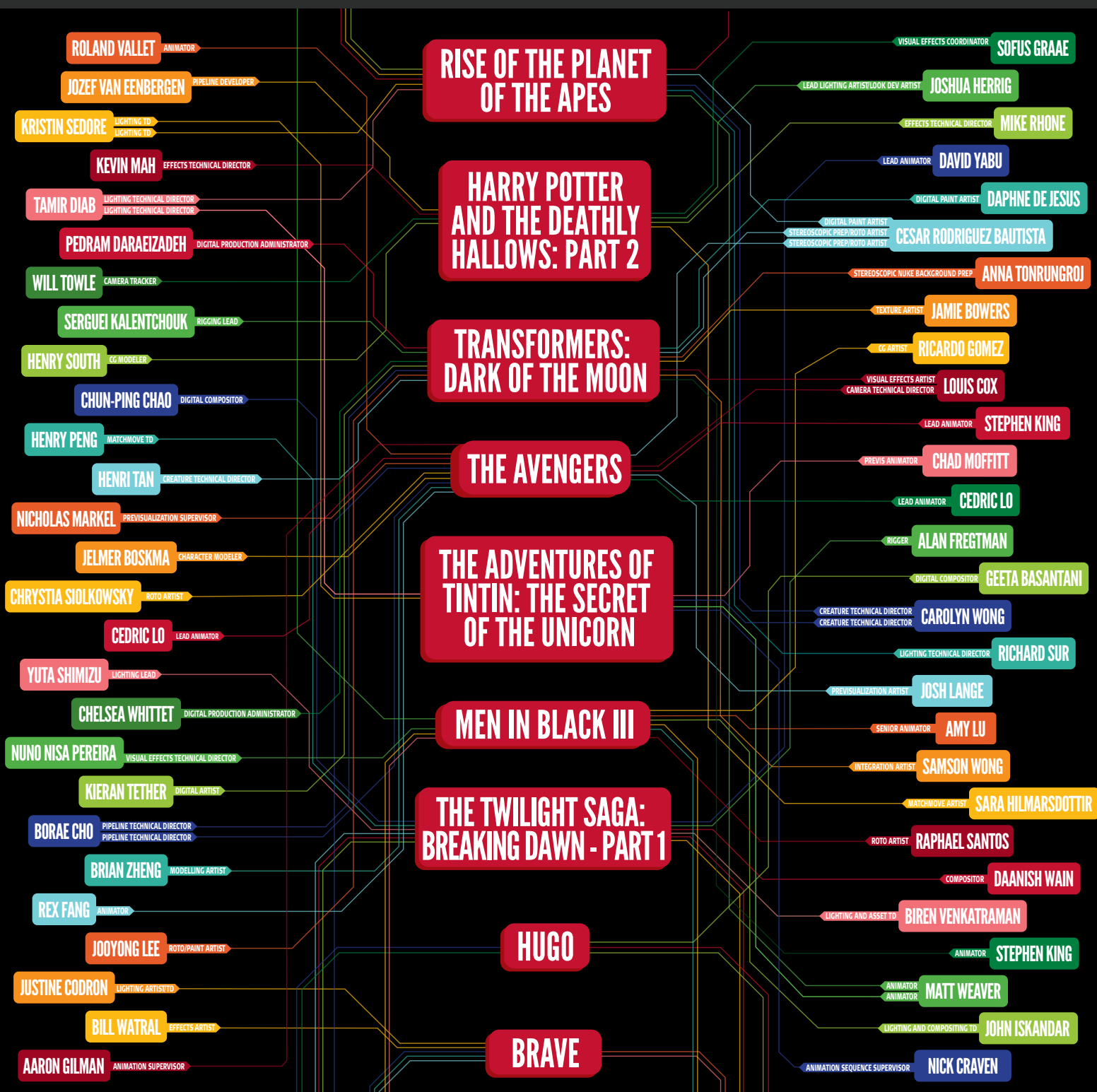
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Custom Brushes for Characters

Chapter 01



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- Free Brushes

A custom brush can add that special texture or help speed up your workflow. You can use a combination of custom brushes to quickly add cracks, dirt and scratches to textures or images, or use them to paint an underlying texture such as skin, cloth, leather and metal to a section of a painting. In this tutorial series our artists will show us how to create different custom brushes to texture a character. This will involve them starting with a basic un-textured character that they have designed, and then demonstrating how to create brushes to add areas of texture and detail.

Chapter 01 – Large Scaly Monster

Software Used: Photoshop

Introduction

This aim of this tutorial is to create a custom brush that can be used to add scales to a creature of some description.

Before we go on to deal with the task of creating the actual brush, there is the issue of designing the monster. As there was no criteria or a brief to work to, I decided to start doodling and see where my brush took me. I didn't have any preconceived ideas prior to starting, except that I wanted to avoid a bipedal animal as I had recently painted one of these and thought a change might be interesting.

The problem facing a custom brush specifically aimed at characters is that it has to conform to the anatomy, which means the pattern or texture must follow the anatomical contours. This is somewhat trickier compared to using them in the context of an environment, but as we shall see, the brush presets help.

As already mentioned I didn't have any preconceived notions, so using a standard Hard Round brush with opacity set to Pen Pressure I started to sketch.

After some trial and error, and then some further error, I arrived at an initial idea, which you can see in **Fig.01**.



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I based my design on a quadruped, but also amalgamated the characteristics of a gorilla, which walks on its arms. I moulded the head and upper back around an octopus, but lent the face a rodent-like appearance with a jaw full of incisors. The hind legs resemble those of a dog whereas the front legs are somewhat different, with an elongated carpus.

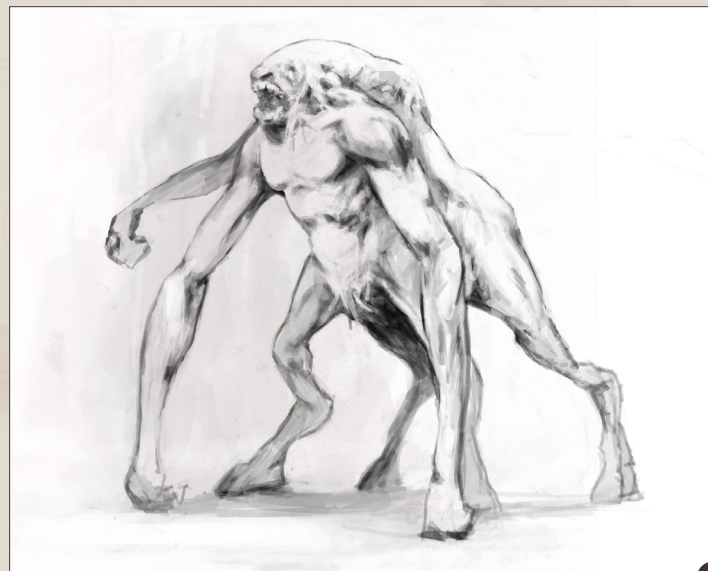
I blended these varying aspects together from numerous animals to try and create a more alien appearance. To avoid it looking too similar to a centaur I also drew in a second set of arms.

moved from the chin down to the groin area. I didn't want the creature to look like it had an octopus placed on its shoulders!

I then added the fourth arm, which I attached to its neighbor with a thin web of skin (**Fig.03**).

I also experimented with some other head designs, as I was unsure about this aspect. The one I favored displayed bat-like ears and an almost kangaroo-shaped head. This variation was seemingly undersized for the body, but I quite liked this quirk.

With the key ideas drawn in, I began refining the creature in preparation for the scales (**Fig.04**).



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Fig.02 shows a more developed stage of the design with modified hind legs and the tentacles

The first stage when creating any custom brush is to decide on a motif or shape that will form the basis of the brush stroke. When you look at scales on a fish or reptile, you soon realize that they are made up of a series of interlocking shapes that are similar in structure. Therefore when creating a custom brush, it follows that we start from a similar starting point.

Fig.05 shows a basic scale shape I created as a black outline surrounded by a selection area.

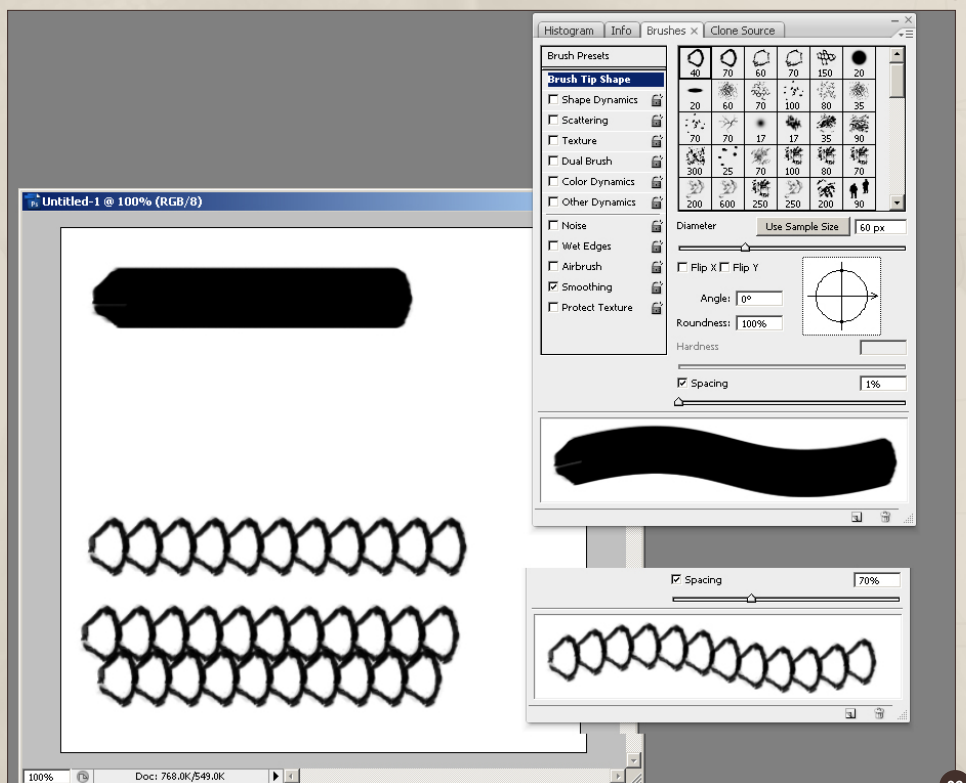
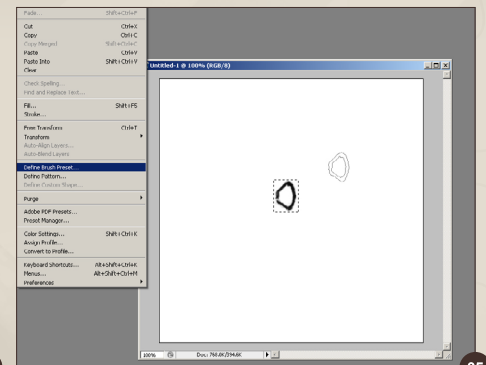
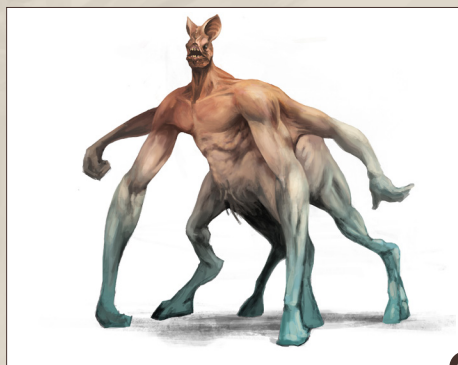
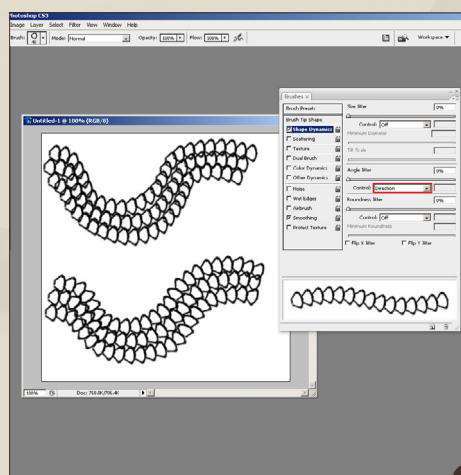
Once you have a shape you need to go to **Edit > Define Brush Preset** and turn this into an actual brush (white outline). After naming it, select it within your brush library and then open the brush palette.

The first thing we need to do is alter the **Spacing** under the **Brush Tip Shape** tab. If the spacing is left around 1% then the brush stroke appears as a continuous black line (see upper stroke in **Fig.06**). By dragging the **Spacing** slider we can reveal the scale shape (in this case 70%).

You can see now that when you drag the brush across the canvas, it displays a series that can then be interlocked.

The next set of parameters that generally need addressing are the **Shape Dynamics**. In this case one that is worth experimenting with is the **Angle Jitter**, as this will help paint scales that align with the contours of our creature.

Fig.07 shows three brush strokes in the upper left with the **Angle Jitter** set to **Off**. You can see



that the scales remain aligned throughout the curved stroke.

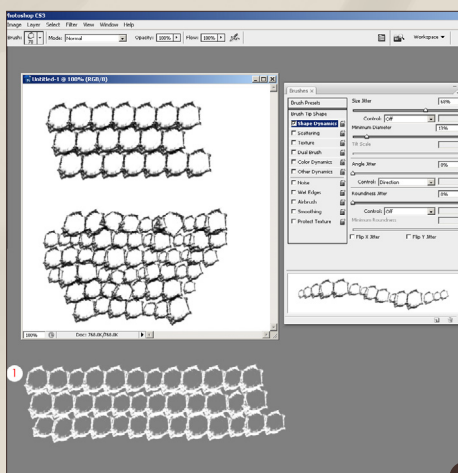
When the angle is set to **Direction** the scales orientate with the brush, and as you can see in

the lower example, they now follow the angle of the stroke. This is particularly helpful when trying to add them onto the anatomy.

One of the other useful parameters worth experimenting with is **Size Jitter**, which you can see in **Fig.08** is set at 68%. You can also manipulate the **Minimum Diameter**, which alters the scale of the smaller deviations.

On the left are two versions of the brush with **Size Jitter** enabled (lower) and one with it turned down to 0% (top).

You will notice how the random variations in scale help add a more natural look to the scales, albeit slightly exaggerated in this instance. If you were to ramp the **Minimum Diameter** up



to around 70%, then you would have a more realistic variation within the set brush size (1).

If you prefer using the pressure sensitivity of the tablet to vary the brush size then this is also an option under the Size Jitter.

Fig.09 shows a stroke with varying pressure and the resultant variation in the size of the scales. This can be an effective way of changing the scale of a brush stroke, but it does require quite a steady hand and a fair amount of control.

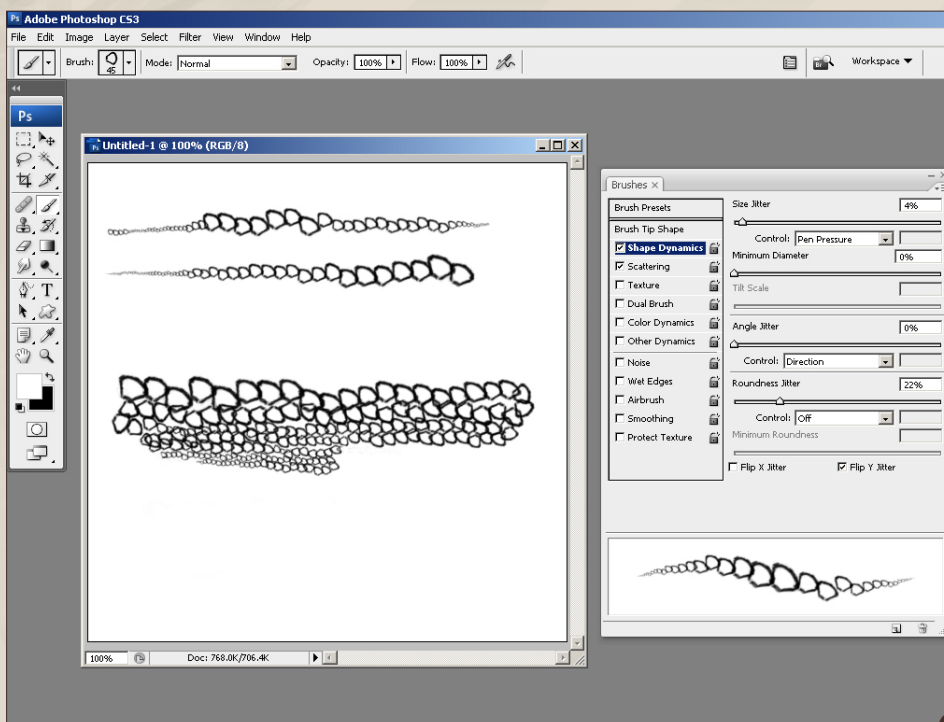
The previous settings are not crucial, but are worth exploring when you create your own library.

Fig.10 shows three different brushes used on our sample creature with the blending mode set to Screen. You can see that each one has a different quality and none perfectly match, which is inevitable.

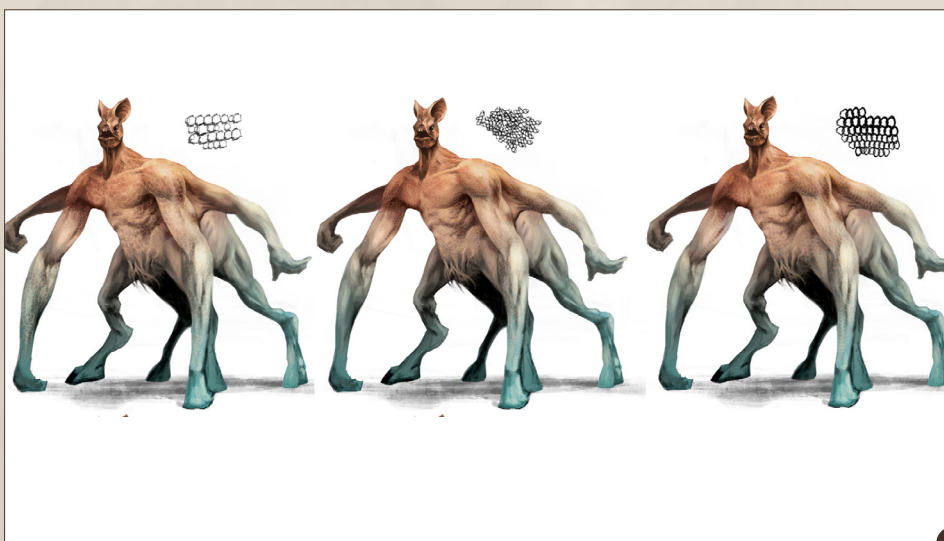
Although these brushes will not produce wholly accurate scales, they will at least provide a decent starting point and be adequately suggestive of the different planes.

If we want to be more meticulous we can add scales in sections and then use the Warp tool (Edit > Transform > Warp) to more carefully match the perspective and anatomy (**Fig.11**).

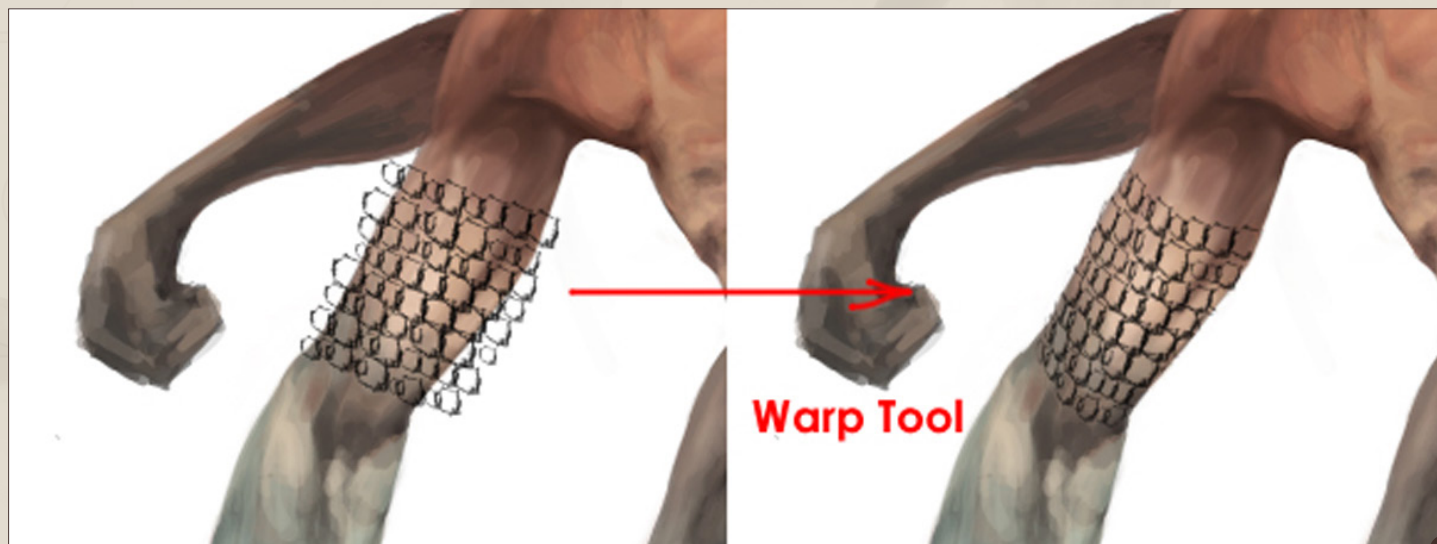
With a brush such as this it is unrealistic to presume you can swiftly add scales to any



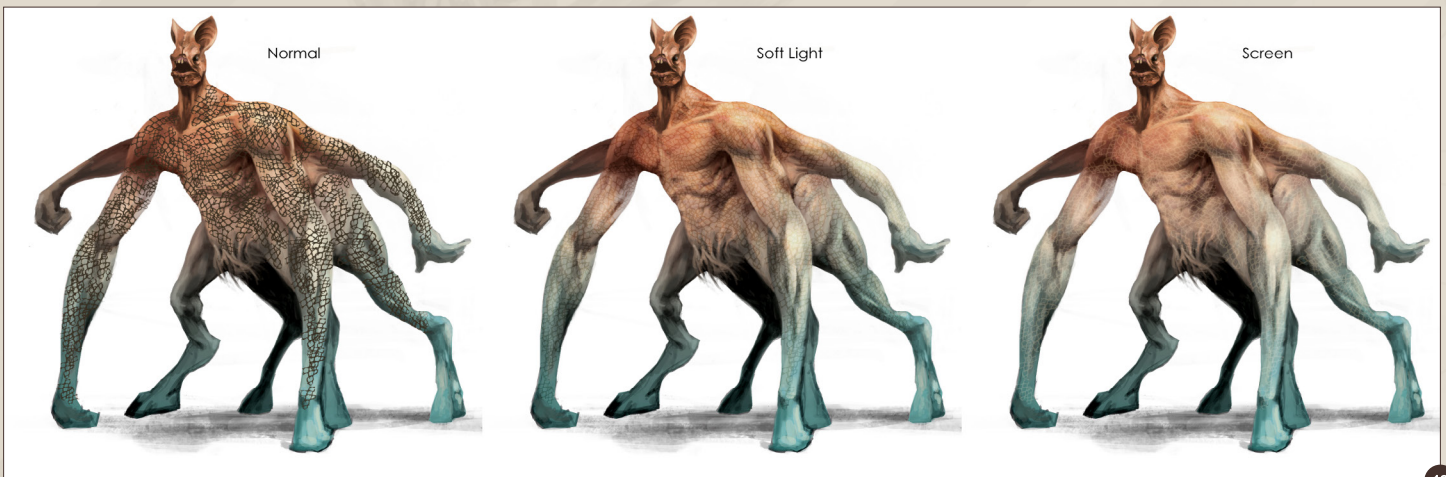
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design and they will work immediately. It will require refinement and further brushwork, but for the most part you will be able to quickly create the right impression, which is the key principle.

Fig.12 shows one of the brushes quickly applied across much of the body. In Normal mode (left) it looks a little crude, but when we alter the blending mode we can see a more satisfactory result with both light and dark outlines.

The next stage is to use this as a foundation on which to focus detail in certain areas and this will involve some manual refinement. There is no way you can produce a custom brush that

will solve all of your artistic problems in a series of brush strokes; the process is simply not that mechanical.

Ultimately you will need to use any custom brush with some level of discretion and learn how to edit the marks you create. They can certainly provide a strong foundation, but invariably will require a degree of adjustment and an artistic eye.

Think of them rather like using textured paper combined with a specific medium; it will help achieve a more tangible effect, but they are nonetheless no more than tools.

In this case I used the custom brush to help determine the array of scales and their size and position. Once done I began modifying them to create highlights and used a soft-edged eraser to tone them down in specific areas.

From the initial phase seen in Fig.12 I went on to develop the scales through to the version shown on the left in **Fig.13**, and eventually through to the modified stage seen on the right.

I retained certain areas to suggest partially reflective scales and toned down other regions that were facing away from the light.



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Richard Tilbury

Web: <http://www.richardtilburyart.com>

Email: ibex80@hotmail.com

NEW WORLD

MAKING OF BY KEN BARTHELMEY

"I had the idea of a herd of gigantic animals from another planet that you've never seen before."



Ken Barthelmey brings us an otherworldly Making Of this month, in which he shows us how he develops creatures from basic sketches through to the final image, and uses photo manipulation to create a realistic surrounding for these creatures to exist in.

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- Free Movie

New World

Software Used: Photoshop

Introduction

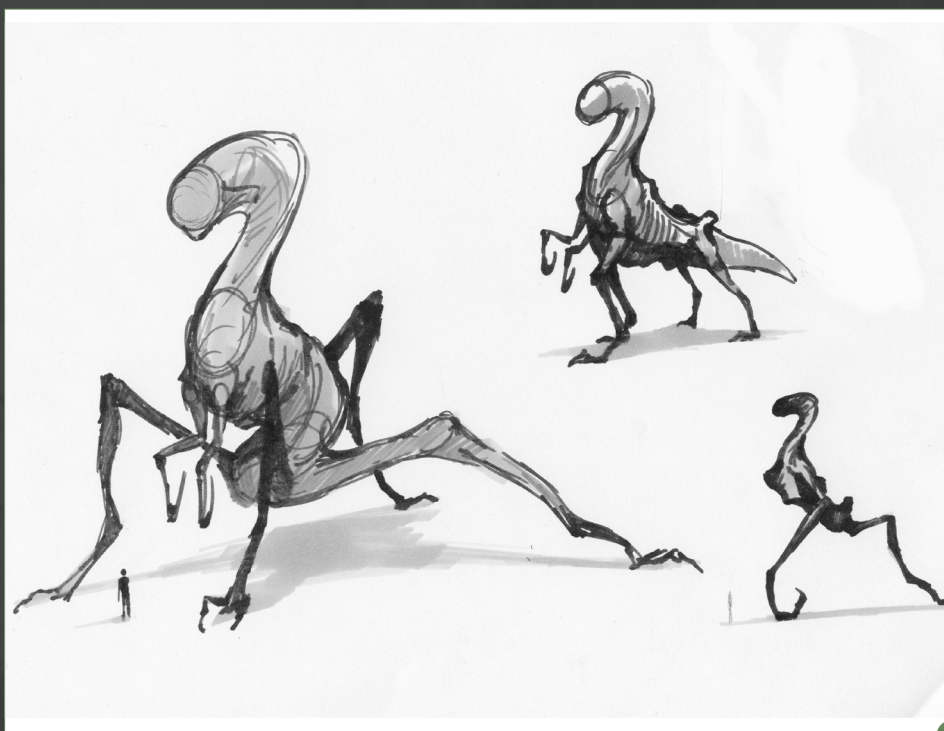
Hi there! My name is Ken Barthelmey, and I am a 22 year old freelance illustrator and concept artist. I am very happy to have the chance to explain to you how I created my picture *New World*. I love to design characters and creatures from new and other worlds that haven't been discovered yet and put them into the right surroundings, so that it looks like they could really exist. You can find more about my works on my website: www.theartofken.com.

In this Making Of, I will show you the development of the creatures, from the sketches to the final picture. It was my goal to let the picture appear as realistic and authentic as possible. For the environment I used several photo manipulations, just like in a matte painting, mixed with painted elements.

I had the idea of a herd of gigantic animals from another planet that you've never seen before. Many of you may think immediately of *Avatar*, but I wanted to create a new world, where the animals were a mixture of a dinosaur and some kind of giraffe. These animals were peaceful herbivores that curiously examined the little human newcomers. I love nature, especially the jungle, and that's why I wanted to bring as much nature as possible into the drawing.

Brainstorming and Designing the Creature

Let's go. At the very beginning, it's important to have an overall idea and concept. I did a



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little brainstorming and came up with some important keywords/clues; for example, huge, elegant, exotic, peaceful, etc. After this, I started sketching diver's body parts. At that moment, it was all about anatomy development. It's a great trick to scribble very fast and just put down on paper all the spontaneous ideas that come up. Usually I use a pencil or a Copic marker. It's important that those sketches don't have details (Fig. 01 – 02)!

You automatically get new ideas during this process and thus create the design step-by-step. After 10 sketches I chose which one I wanted to develop further. It showed an elegant creature with long legs, just like those of a giraffe. I studied the anatomy of a giraffe and noticed that they have extremely long tongues to reach the leaves. This gave me the idea of

tentacles. The hind legs are twisted to get a stable position when the animal rises to reach the treetops. Their pointed legs serve to get a solid hold on the trees. All these little details are very important to create a realistic and authentic design. Just like the understanding of its movements (Fig.03).

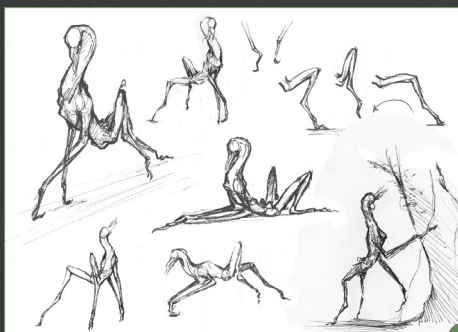
After I was satisfied with the pose and the anatomy, I drew some detailed sketches of bone structure, muscle formation and skin texture (Fig.04). Then I scanned the sketches in, put them in my format and played around with the different elements until I found the right composition.

Planning the Composition

The design was ready, so it was about time to find a good presentation; something that brought



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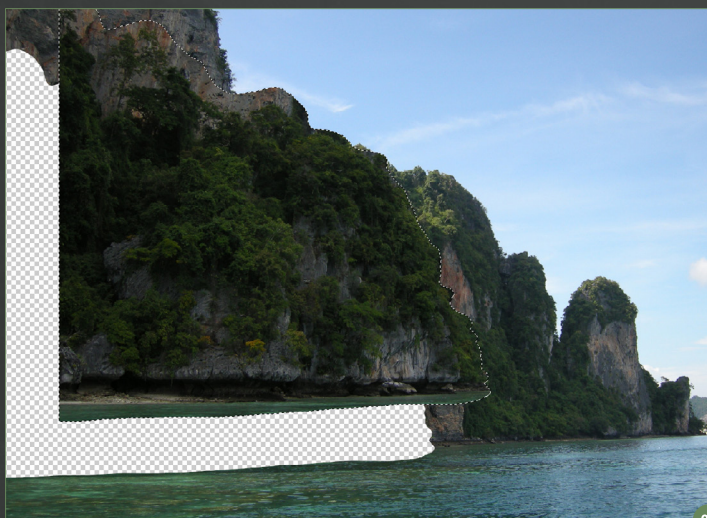
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out the movements of the animals (**Fig.05**). I used some sketches I made before to show the movements. The scene shows a herd; a proud alpha-animal in the middle surrounded by some pups. To demonstrate the size of the creatures, I added some people. For the environment I already had some ideas; everything had to be very huge, beautiful and exotic.

Grayscale/ Painting the Environment

After I was satisfied with the composition, I started to paint the creatures in more (**Fig.06**). I made sure to not get fixated on the details because they come afterwards. When you draw such big illustrations, it's easier to paint in grayscale first. This way you can concentrate better on the lighting and shadows; you can start with a base color after. For this, I created a new layer in Color mode. The environment was basically all covered in shadow, so I chose a cold color, like blue.

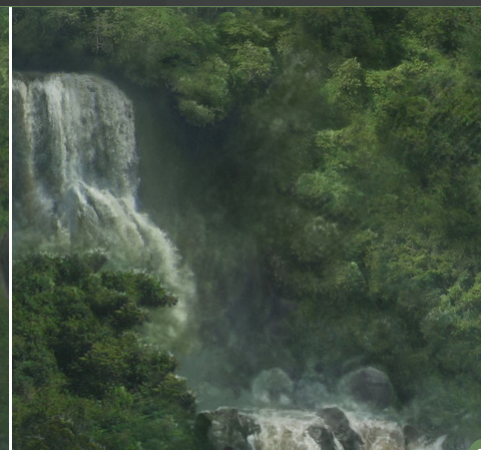
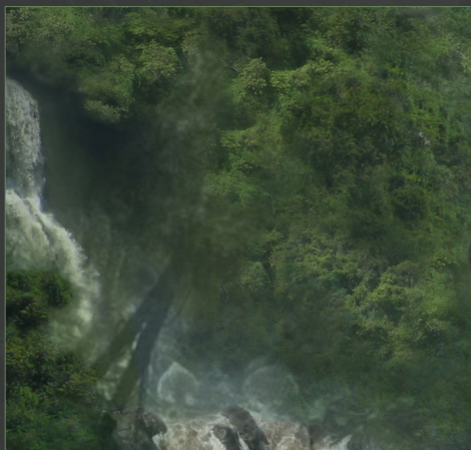
I searched for pictures of trees, nature and jungles on the internet. There are some websites that exist which offer such photos and textures for free, like www.cgtextures.com. I selected some parts of the photo with the Lasso tool, (**Fig.07**) and put this part in my picture. It's was just like a puzzle.

Then I adapted the colors of those parts by using Hue Saturation and Color Balance. The

atmosphere was drawn over the top with a soft basic brush (**Fig.08**). It's normal to have some laps left over or too much of a contrast between the different images. Overpainting solves these problems. Thus you get a pictorial effect (**Fig.09**).

Painting the Creatures

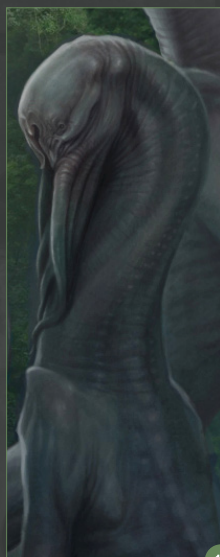
Just like I did with the environment, I created a new layer set to Color mode for the base color. I



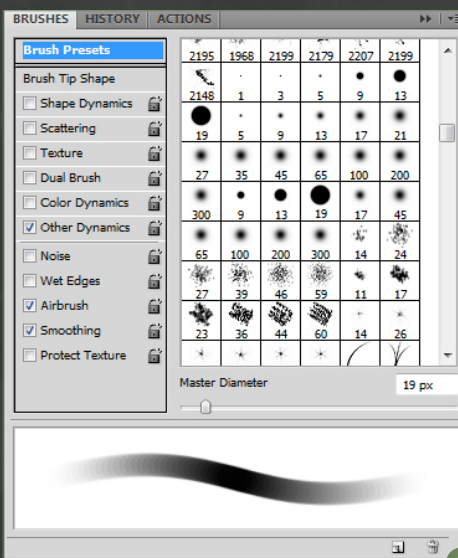
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changed the opacity a bit so the colors didn't appear too strong (**Fig.10**).

After this, I spent plenty of time painting the details, like the texture of their skin (**Fig.11**). I created a new layer, this time in Normal mode, and used a basic brush with sharp edges (**Fig.12**). I had to respect the light and shadow

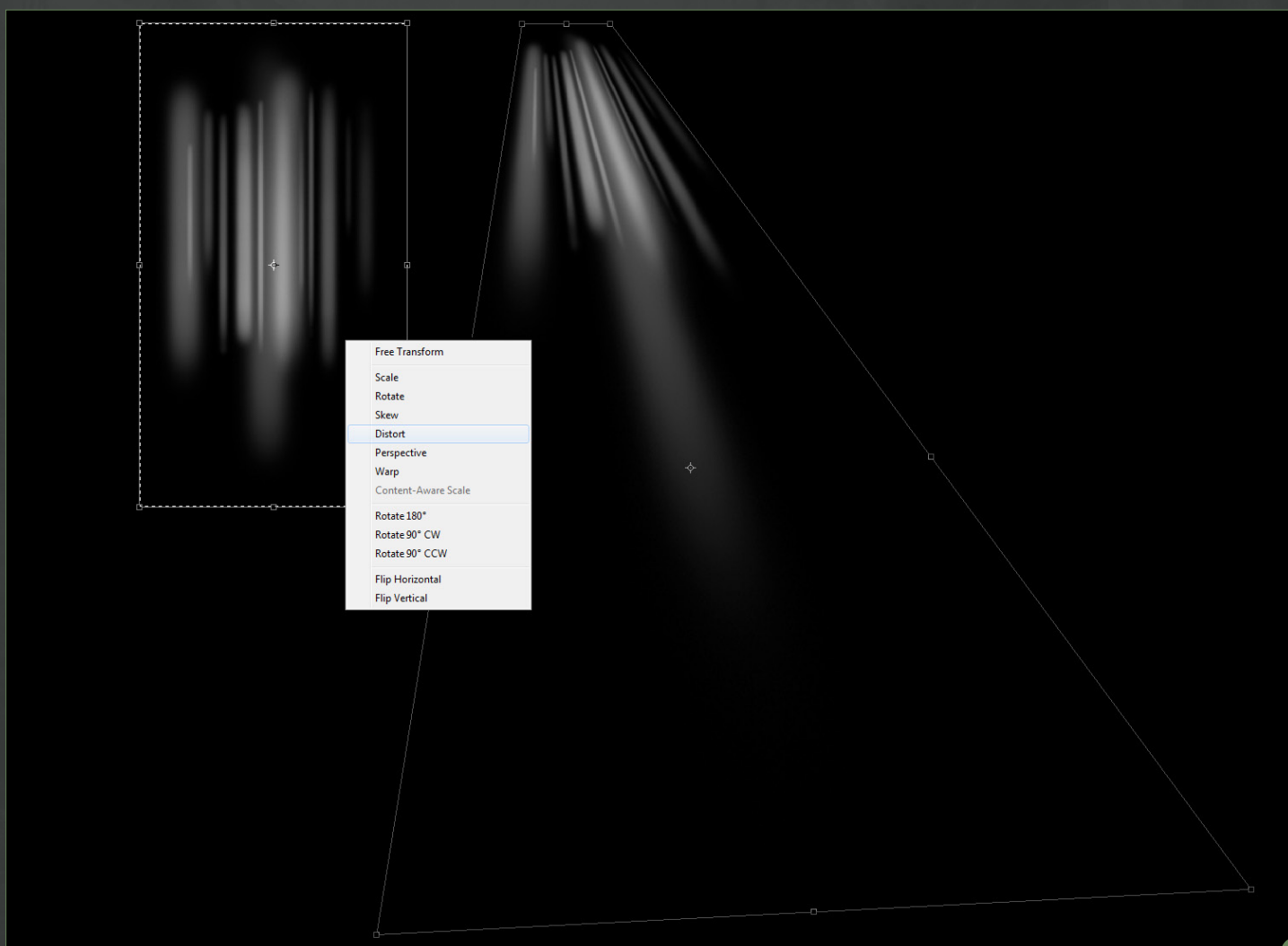
sources, otherwise it would have look like a bad collage.

Highlights

In the picture, there are two light sources. The red arrows in **Fig.13** show the direction that the light is spreading in. The lights are all situated in the background, so most of the creature body

parts are covered in shadows. For the highlights I also used a new layer in Normal mode.

For the light rays I used a separate layer again and drew several straight lines with a soft brush by keeping the Shift button pressed. The lines were of different lengths and opacity. After that I selected it and changed the perspective



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via Distort (**Fig.14**). At the end I changed the opacity slightly.

Texturing

To make the skin of the creature appear much more realistic, I used a texture (**Fig.15**). I

applied it only to the one in the front; for the others it wasn't necessary. I pasted the texture into my document and changed the layer to Soft Light. Later, I fitted the texture into position and erased all the parts that I didn't wanted to texture. I adapted the color via Color Balance

and changed the opacity a bit. The skin texture itself was painted on a new layer in Color Mode.

Sub Surface Scattering

The SSS gives the skin a fleshy look and it therefore appears a lot more vivid (**Fig.16**). I



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created a new layer in Soft Light again; for the colors I used the same as in **Fig.17**.

Sub surface scattering (SSS) is a mechanism of light transport in which light penetrates the surface of a translucent object. It scatters by interacting with the material and exits the surface at a different point, such as with marble, skin or milk. It's difficult to explain, I know, but I hope what I've said makes sense.

Color Correction/ Final Touches

I corrected some colors by playing around with adjustment levels and I paid particular attention to the contrast, making sure it wasn't too strong. That's why I used a Gradient map, which I shifted to 3% opacity (**Fig.18**). Last but not least, I added some details like birds, leaves and plants... and *New World* was created.

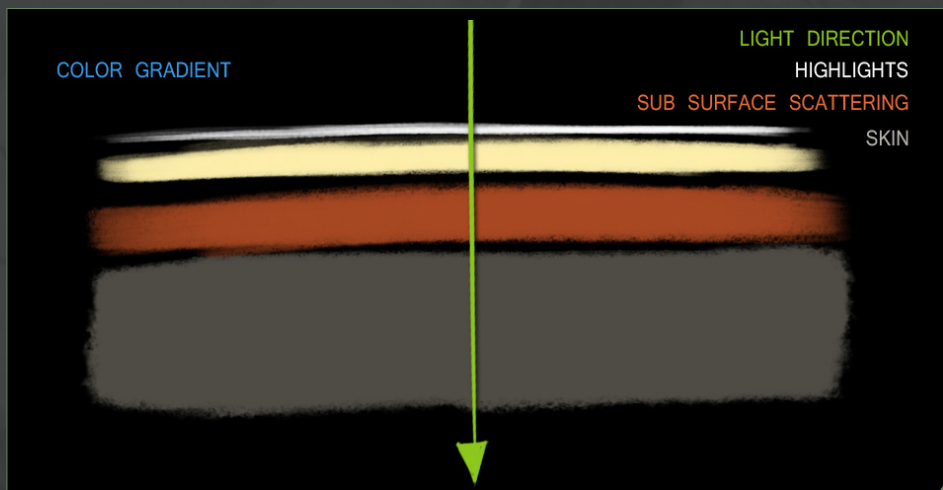
Closing Words

I hope you enjoyed reading my tutorial and that I could give you some helpful tips for your own designs and paintings. A huge thanks to *2DArtist* for the great opportunity to be in a great magazine like this.

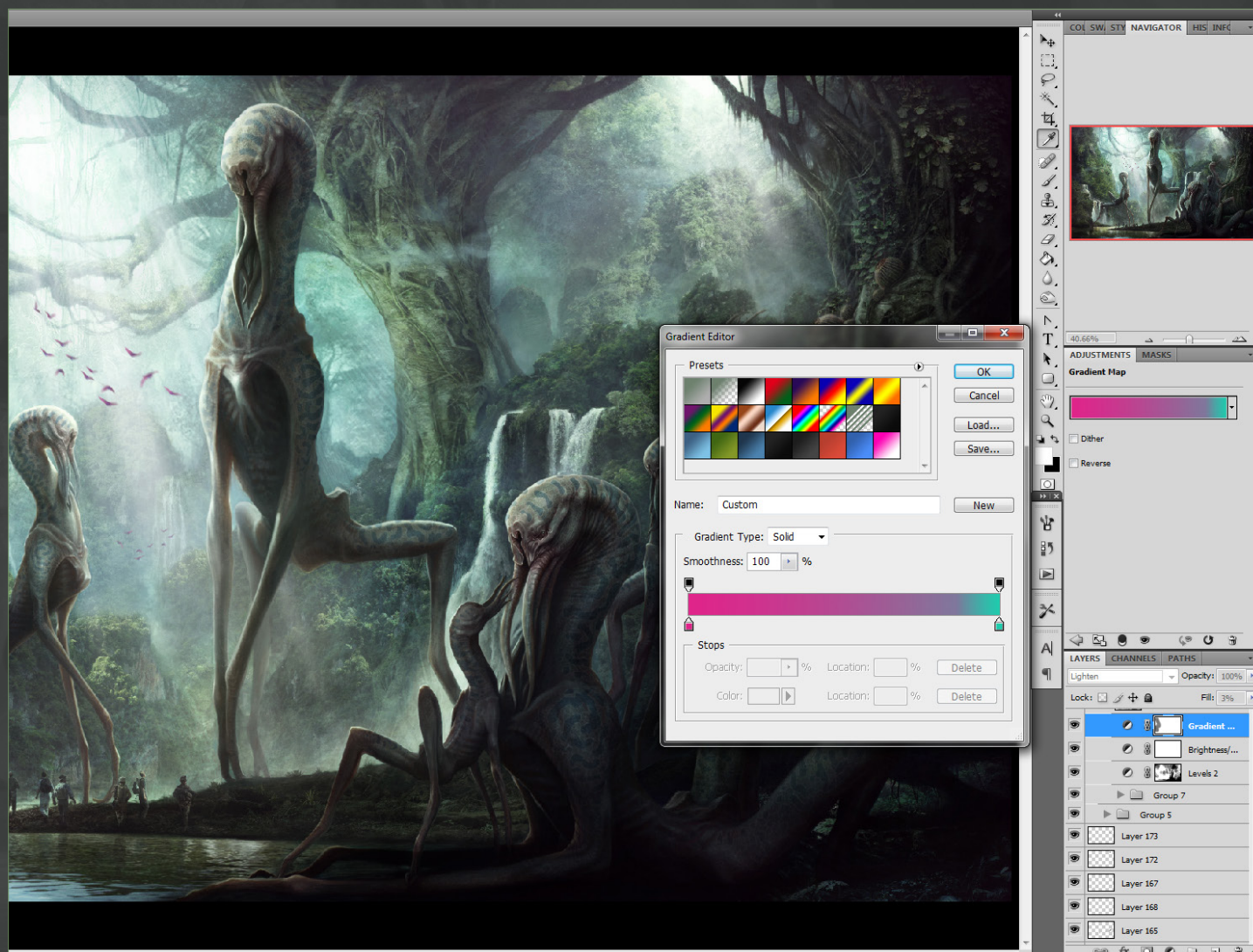
Ken Barthelmey

Web: <http://theartofken.com/>

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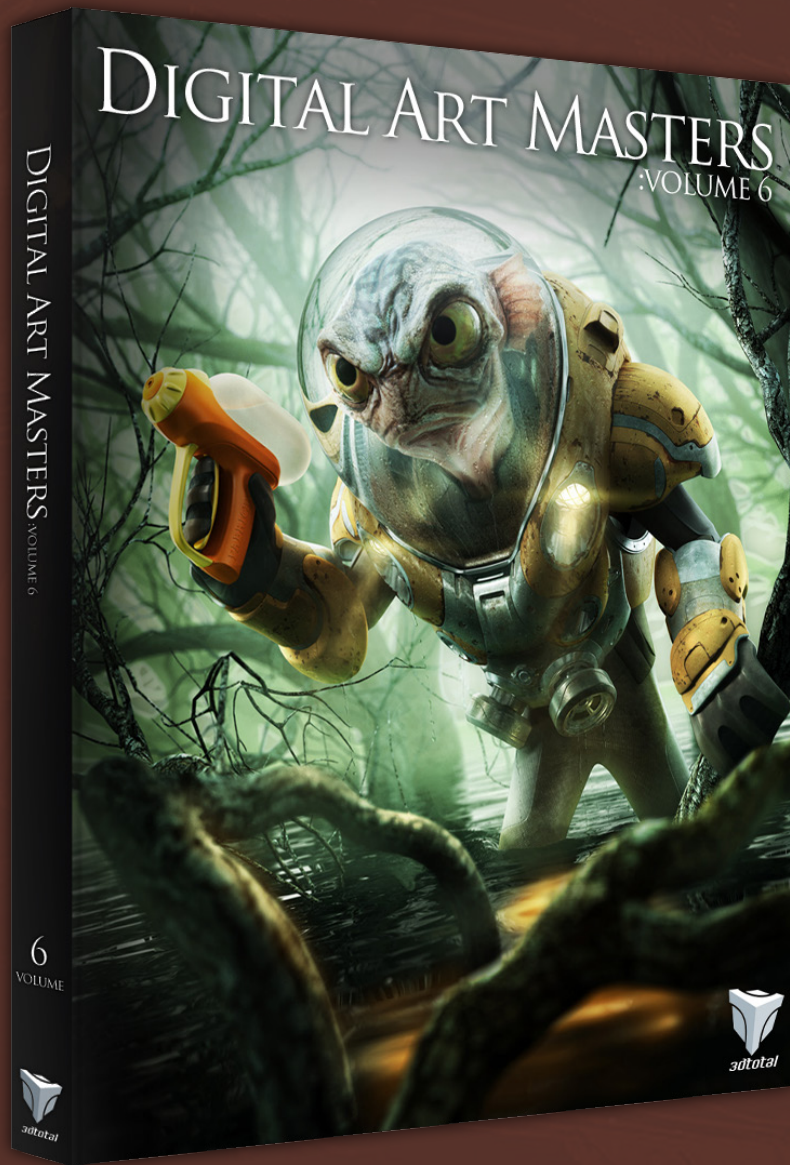
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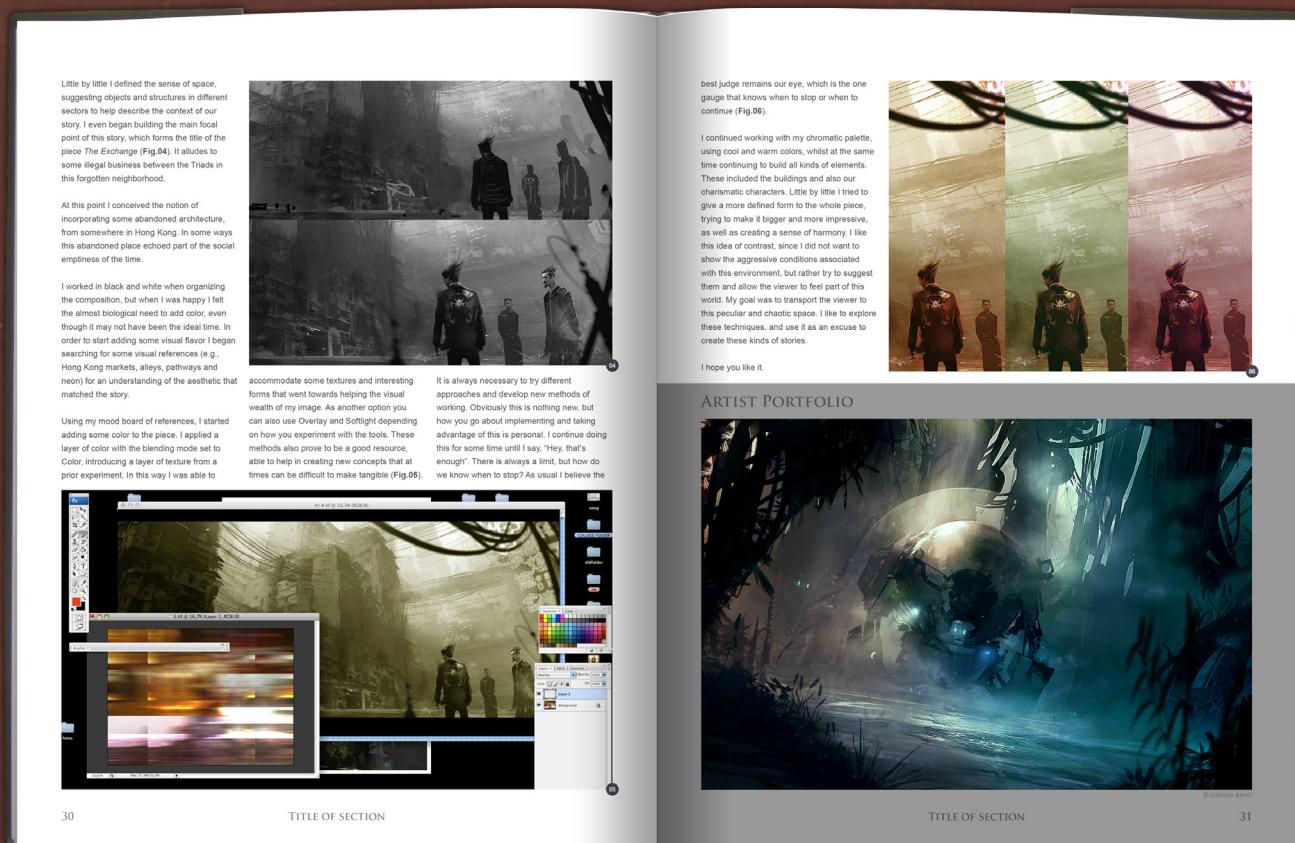
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The following shots of the "The Exchange" book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...



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Contact Information

<http://www.3dtotal.com>

<http://www.3dcreativemag.com>

<http://www.2dartistmag.com>

Editor & Content Manager > Simon Morse

simon@3dtotal.com

Lead Designer > Chris Perrins

chrisp@3dtotal.com

Marketing > Emma Handley

emma@3dtotal.com

Partners

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